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California State Archives
State Government Oral History Program

Oral History Interview

with

MADALE L. WATSON

Democratic State Central Committee
Democratic Party Politics

June 8, June 22 and November 2, 1988
Claremont, California

By Enid Hart Douglass
Claremont Graduate School

CALIFORNIA WOMEN AND PUBLIC POLICYMAKING



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PREFACE

On September 25, 1985, Governor George Deukmejian signed into law A.B. 2104 (Chapter 965 of the Statutes of 1985). This legislation established, under the administration of the California State Archives, a State Government Oral History Program "to provide through the use of oral history a continuing documentation of state policy development as reflected in California's legislative and executive history."

The following interview is one of a series of oral histories undertaken for inclusion in the state program. These interviews offer insights into the actual workings of both the legislative and executive processes and policy mechanisms. They also offer an increased understanding of the men and women who create legislation and implement state policy. Further, they provide an overview of issue development in California state government and of how both the legislative and executive branches of government deal with issues and problems facing the state.

Interviewees are chosen primarily on the basis of their contributions to and influence on the policy process of the state of California. They include members of the legislative and executive branches of the state government as well as legislative staff, advocates, members of the media, and other people who played significant roles in specific issue areas of major and continuing importance to California.

By authorizing the California State Archives to work cooperatively with oral history units at California colleges and universities to conduct interviews, this program is structured to take advantage of the resources and expertise in oral history available through California's several institutionally based programs.

Participating as cooperating institutions in the State Government Oral History Program are:

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The establishment of the California State Archives State Government Oral History Program marks one of the most significant commitments made by any state toward the preservation and documentation of its governmental history. It supplements the often fragmentary historical written record by adding an organized primary source, enriching the historical information available on given topics and allowing for more thorough historical analysis. As such, the program, through the preservation and publication of interviews such as the one which follows, will be of lasting value to current and future generations of scholars, citizens, and leaders.

John F. Burns
State Archivist

July 27, 1988

This interview is printed on acid-free paper.

RESTRICTIONS ON THIS INTERVIEW

State agrees that the Work, to be determined by interviewee within 30 days of receipt of interview transcript from the cooperating institution for the purpose of interviewee review, will be restricted and not be available for public access until after the year 1993, not to exceed interviewee's lifetime.

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It is recommended that this oral history be cited as follows:

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INTERVIEW HISTORY

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Interview Time and Place

June 8, 1988
Oral History Program Office in Claremont, California
Afternoon Session of 3 hours

June 22, 1988
Oral History Program Office in Claremont, California
Afternoon Session of 3 3/4 hours

November 2, 1988
Oral History Program Office in Claremont, California
Afternoon Session of 3 hours

Editing

The interviewer/editor checked the verbatim manuscript of the interviews against the original tape recordings and verified proper names. Insertions by the editor are bracketed.

The edited transcript was forwarded to Madale L. Watson, who made only minor emendations and returned the approved manuscript.

The interviewer/editor prepared the introductory materials.

Papers:

The papers and records of Madale L. Watson are in her home. Her intent is to deposit them in the California State Archives.

Tapes and Interview Records

The original tape recordings of the interview are in the Oral History Program Office, Claremont Graduate School, along with the records relating to the interview. Master tapes are deposited in the California State Archives.

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY

Madale Long Watson was born on September 30, 1911 in Covina, California. Her father, Vernelle R. "Jack" Long, raised chickens in Baldwin Park when the poultry business was a thriving industry in the San Gabriel Valley. Her mother, Edna Goodrich Long, was a housewife. While raising Madale, her brother and sister, Mrs. Long was active in the education system and women's clubs of Baldwin Park.

Madale Watson attended the Baldwin Park Elementary School and graduated from Covina High School in 1929. While attending the Frank Wiggins Trade School in Los Angeles, she married Richard H. Watson, a photographer for RKO Studios, in March 1932. Mrs. Watson worked as a professional dressmaker until 1942 and during World War II worked at a variety of jobs in Los Angeles.

Mrs. Watson's interest in politics began with her father, who was Congressman Jerry Voorhis' field deputy for the Twelfth Congressional District between 1937 and 1946. Her work for James Harvey Brown's campaigns for the Fifty-sixth Assembly District in 1948 and 1950 earned her an appointment to the Democratic State Central Committee. Mrs. Watson ran unsuccessfully for the Fifty-eighth Assembly District in 1952, the same year Jesse M. Unruh was defeated in the Sixty-fifth Assembly District, marking the beginning of their thirty-five-year association in Democratic politics.

During Mrs. Watson's long career in the Democratic Party, she was a founding board member of the California Democratic Council and has served on the Executive Board of the Democratic State Central Committee almost continuously since 1950, including service as State Vice Chairman. Mrs. Watson was also Treasurer, California Democratic Party, Southern Division from 1971 to 1977. She attended five national party conventions.

In addition to her political involvement, Mrs. Watson was also active in community affairs. She was an American Red Cross nurse's aide from 1943 to 1961 and was a public member of the Board of Nursing Education and Registration from 1961 to 1965. She served in the Van Ness Avenue Parent-Teacher Association for fifteen years and is a Life Member. She was appointed as a public member of the Public Employees Retirement System Board of Administration in 1984 and continues to serve on that board.

[Session 1, June 8, 1988]

[Begin Tape 1, Side A]

DOUGLASS: Mrs. Watson, you were born, was it September 30?

WATSON: September 30, 1911.

DOUGLASS: And where were you born?

WATSON: In Covina, and raised in Baldwin Park.

DOUGLASS: So your family moved from Covina to Baldwin Park when you were. . . .

WATSON: In about 1916. I remained there until I married in 1932, and I went to Los Angeles at that time.

DOUGLASS: I think it is interesting to know why your family lived in Covina at that early stage, in terms of what we think of Covina today.

WATSON: I don't have any idea why. They lived in Corona and had been there apparently. . . . They married in 1906. They were in Corona until 1910. They came to Covina in 1910, and I arrived in 1911.

DOUGLASS: Now, "they " being your father, whose name was. . . .

WATSON: V. R. "Jack" Long.

in groups of two, five, all within the same building. And you were the janitor and everything else. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: She was born in . . .

WATSON: In Illinois. But I have no idea, what town. As I understood it, she was a small child when the family went to Worthington. Her parents were farmers.

DOUGLASS: Do you know how she happened to come to Corona?

WATSON: I don't really understand. I know that they came, she and a sister. They were both unmarried. They came with a family, so far as I know, to Corona. My father said there was no one quite as much a daredevil as my mother. Which I found very hard ever to understand from my remembrance of her. But I don't have any idea why they came to California. I believe it to be in either 1905 or 1906.

My father was of a family who were farmers in Lawrence, Kansas. He was one of four children. There was a son that died in infancy. There were two daughters. It was an interesting thing, which I did not learn about until the last ten or fifteen years, but both of the sisters were graduates of the University of Kansas in 1905 and 1907.

DOUGLASS: That's amazing.

WATSON: Yes. For that time, I believe it was not the usual thing. But my father did not conform in thinking, apparently, with his father, and he was just literally disowned.

DOUGLASS: Actually disowned.

WATSON: Actually disowned.

DOUGLASS: Was it over political matters?

WATSON: I don't have any idea. The only way that I am aware that this is true was that when my grandfather passed away in 1927 or 1929, in a will, a couple of articles that were like heirlooms--such things as a grandfather's clock, which was around 300 years, and a family Bible--were willed to my brother. It was a case of bypassing my father. They were willed to his grandson and not anybody else. The three of us, my father's three children, were the only heirs in California. One woman was married and had a marriage annulled. She was a teacher. And the other woman married, but had no children. So the only children in the Long family were the three of us in California.

DOUGLASS: They may have been people of some means because of the college education.

WATSON: I gathered so. David Long was apparently. . . . I suppose you could classify him as a good farmer. I know very little. I saw my grandmother in the middle-thirties. She was in

her eighties. I never saw my grandfather, as far as the Longs were concerned.

There was a political background within my grandmother's side of the family. She was a Brady. Her name was Norah Caroline Brady. And the Bradys were involved in the political world from Pennsylvania to Idaho. And they were all good Republicans. I would not be surprised if the fact that my father turned out to be a really liberal Democrat may have been part of the problem. As a result of an accident as an infant, he had only the sight of one eye. To my understanding, he was sent somewhere to a high school for business, in terms of bookkeeping or something of that sort.

He apparently left Kansas in 1900, and he came to California. I heard him remark once that in the state of Colorado he was known as "Bill" Long. How he arrived with the name Jack when he got to California, I have no way of knowing. I only know that my mother never called him anything but Jack Long. The marker at Rose Hills today simply says, "V. R. 'Jack' Long." That is the way we knew him.

DOUGLASS: Now you said, I believe, when he came out, he worked at digging the canals in Venice.

WATSON: From what I remember, he allegedly arrived in San Francisco. How he arrived, I don't know. I

know he referred to the subdivision development of the town of Venice, and that it was strictly a rip-roaring, real estate development, just as all of southern California has been for literally a hundred years. The developers' dream was to have a facsimile of the city of Venice from Italy.

These canals were being created, and he was part of a construction unit there. The only remark I can remember him talking about was that he said, "Well, money was tight, and they wanted the workers to try to take out part of their wages and invest in the project." And, like everybody else, they needed the money in order to live, so they did not do that. As it is being redeveloped today--it is interesting to note that a number of those canals, a couple of them have been dredged out, others they are considering--apparently, they are trying to salvage what they started in 1905. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: So history repeats itself.

WATSON: It certainly does. He went from there to Corona. I have no idea why, other than that I know it has to be approximately 1905, 1906. The reason why I know that is that I have one of the most lovely, ornate valentines, and on the back of it says 1906. I do know the story was that

my father paid fifty cents, quite extravagant in those days, to have a young boy deliver it to my mother. I think it must have been Valentine's Day of 1906, and they were married in June of 1906.

DOUGLASS: He was in love.

WATSON: Apparently, he was. I gather, from some of the remarks, it allegedly was a whirlwind affair.

DOUGLASS: Let's come over to Covina, which is where you arrived. And you talked about the difference in your parents' personalities because of the way they were addressed. Your mother was a more formal person, but I think you have indicated that she was an active person.

WATSON: I can't help but believe the event that apparently changed my mother's attitude. . . . She was married in 1906. Within the year, she had a baby girl who died at birth. I gather, from what few times you heard any remarks, it had to be a devastating experience. I don't quite know why they came to Covina. I know that my father worked for a grocery store known as Warner Whitzel's Grocery on Citrus Avenue in Covina.

When my mother found herself pregnant in 1911 with me, she lived the whole nine months literally in terror. She was just convinced that both she and the baby would not make it. I

gather the delivery of me was not a pleasant experience. On the other hand, I have a brother that is fifteen months younger than I. Then I have a sister seven years younger than I. My earliest recollection is, of course, like being between three and four in Covina. I really only remember. . . . I think we lived on Cypress Avenue. I was born on Center Street, which I went back to take a look at. It is all automobile showrooms today. But we lived on Cypress Avenue in Covina.

My father had Rhode Island Reds. People in those days raised chickens, many of them, for show purposes similar in a manner in which you have cat and dog shows today. I know that in 1912 he took a couple of those Rhode Island Reds to San Francisco to what was called a "World's Fair." He came back with either second or third prize with his Rhode Island Reds. And I have a recollection of going into Los Angeles with some black Rose Comb bantams that apparently my father had as a hobby. But they were entered into a poultry show in Los Angeles under my name. So those ribbons turned out to be mine.

DOUGLASS: Let's go back and talk about your mother's personality. I think you were implying that you

weren't sure what effect the loss of that first child might have had on her outlook on life. I wanted to get a little bit about her role in the community.

WATSON: The only thing that I know which she was in such opposition of, at least how I saw her in my growing-up days, was something that happened when we became teenagers. We came across a photograph of my mother, and I would not be surprised if it had been the beach at Venice. Anyway, it is a group of three or four young people. It is a photograph of my mother with a cigarette in her hand. [Laughter] I do remember when my brother and I found it. Oh, we thought we had really found something. The explanation, of course, was that, "oh dear, no," she didn't smoke, "this was on a dare."

Years later, in some conversation with my father, my father said, "You just don't understand, Madale. Your mother was as close to being a daredevil as anything I have ever met." I was always amazed at this conversation because it was not in keeping with the woman I knew as my mother. Or, even when I was an adult, the type of woman my mother appeared to be.

So what she may have really been like, other than I am sure she was fairly willful because, as I say, she came to California with

her sister who was ten years older than she, I don't know. I can remember many times Aunt Mary remarking, "Well, Edna just did exactly what she wanted to do most of her life." Yes, she was a strongminded woman.

DOUGLASS: I believe you said that she was active in the community.

WATSON: This is true. I have no idea what she did prior to my being six years old, in first grade. We moved to Baldwin Park in 1916. My sister arrived in 1918. By the time she was five, it would be 1923, my mother had made up her mind that the Baldwin Park school system needed a kindergarten. This was county territory, and we were under the jurisdiction of the Los Angeles County superintendent of schools. She and another woman in Baldwin Park simply acquired the materials, the petitions that you needed, and they walked this town. At that time probably it had 2,000 or 2,500 people in it, and they obtained the amount of signatures needed. And the Baldwin Park school system acquired a kindergarten class. And Blanche [Long] went to that. It started then.

DOUGLASS: She knew how to deal with that.

WATSON: Yes. When she made up her mind to do something. She was an activist in the Baldwin Park Women's

Club from 1919 to the day she died in 1963. It **was** an interesting thing because her calendar in 1963 indicated the dates of the past president's committee, the garden committee, the literary committee. There was nothing in the Baldwin Park Women's Club, even at the age seventy-nine, that she was not an activist in.

DOUGLASS: **She** was president at one time.

WATSON: **Yes.** She was president when they had the groundbreaking of the building that is on. . . . I think it is Baldwin Park Boulevard. It is still a community building, to my knowledge.

DOUGLASS: Was it called the Women's Club then?

WATSON: **Yes.** It is a portion of the Federated Women's Clubs throughout this country. It is the same organizaion in which the Ebell Club in the city of Los Angeles is a member club.

DOUGLASS: It is not a junior women's club.

WATSON: **Oh, no.** It was the Women's Club. I guess one of the most interesting episodes of that little item turns out to be, I think it was the year before she died. I was in the habit of coming out occasionally to go to what was known in the springtime as the Mother-Daughter Luncheon in the spring. I came out from the city. We went out the front door and started down the street. As we started, my mother said, "Now, Madale, do you have a clean handkerchief?" I said, "Yes,

mother." She said, "Now, my dear, I do hope you will be careful and watch your language." Now, I am fifty-two years old. [Laughter] My mother is seventy-nine, but it didn't make any difference. You still had this said to you, regardless.

She truly was a lady. No doubt about it. You would have never known the difference between the woman who had to raise three children with not all the conveniences that we have today. At one time, we had as many as 10,000 chickens on this piece of property. The physical work was tremendous as against what goes on today. Yet, when she put herself together to go to the club meetings, she had--as I always referred to it--a lovely hat. If she never had another thing, she had a pretty hat and white gloves. And she was a lady. And I was her problem. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: She was quite articulate, I believe you said.

WATSON: Yes. She was. She had been good at limericks and that type of thing. But after my father died, she took classes in literature and writing that were offered through the Women's Club. She wrote a complete history of the town of Baldwin Park from the time it was Vineland and changed its name to Baldwin Park in hopes that [E. J.]

Lucky Baldwin would give them some of his land when he was land poor, in that day. Which he did not do. She wrote a couple of pieces of very interesting poetry in whatever kinds of the competitive things they do within these organizations throughout southern California. She had done very well with them.

DOUGLASS: Your mother was well known in the town, it sounds like.

WATSON: Yes. In her day.

DOUGLASS: I meant, as the woman bringing you up.

WATSON: Oh, yes. Although, I don't have any recollection of her attending things such as a PTA [Parent-Teacher Association] meeting, I can remember--because when I was in high school, we had to go to Covina for our high schooling--I would come home on a Tuesday afternoon. I was excused from school and came down and babysat all of the youngsters of the mothers who were going to a PTA meeting, which turned out to be in 1928 and 1929. That is where I met my husband. I am all of sixteen years old, and I am babysitting all these children.

My husband turned out to be the bus driver for the school district in Baldwin Park.

[Laughter] He had come in 1927 from Iowa. He had an uncle who owned a dairy in Baldwin Park. He had come from Iowa to his uncle's dairy. He

worked for him. He didn't care for that and didn't last very long. Very shortly, he became the bus driver for the school bus for the Baldwin Park Elementary School. He also was the projectionist for the town theater. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: So did you meet him when he brought these youngsters? Picked them up?

WATSON: Picked them up when they got out of school. It was when I first met him. I was sixteen-years old. That is now sixty years ago.

DOUGLASS: That is fascinating. That's how you met him.

WATSON: As far as community things were concerned, which were what she considered the welfare of the community as a whole, my mother worked for what time one could give when you figure the amount of work an individual of very ordinary means could do. She was an avid reader. I can remember in high school coming home every so often and her statement was: "Now, Madale, you need to help. Let's get the dishes done and get the house straightened up." She had read all day. [Laughter] Before father got home, we would have things in order so he would not know what she had done.

DOUGLASS: That is an interesting insight.

WATSON: From what little time one had out of twenty-four hours, we were read to as small children. And

we always had, and we were always urged, to read anything we could lay our hands on.

I was thinking the other day when the Los Angeles Times sent a notice that the price had gone up. Isn't this interesting? I am seventy-seven years old, I can never remember not having the Los Angeles Times delivered to the house, other than maybe four to five times for possibly one month when my father became so angry with the editorial section of the Los Angeles Times that we would either have to have the Los Angeles Herald or the [Los Angeles] Express or the [Los Angeles] Examiner. And that would last just about a month. Then, because he felt those papers were rather sensational, and they didn't give you true information, why then we would go back to having the Los Angeles Times. So I have lived with it through several members of the [Harry] Chandler family.

DOUGLASS: Maybe we could swing back to your father in his role as a community person. Do you know how he happened to get into the poultry business?

WATSON: Actually, I don't. The only thing that I can remember was that, as a very small child, we had these Rhode Island Reds. What he did through the years. . . . I have a feeling that if he was in the grocery business, he must have

started it in terms of it being like a hobby, because they were show birds.

But as the years went on, he bred a line of Rhode Island Reds, which are a heavy bird, for egg production. I would not be surprised that I still probably have some records from the Los Angeles County Fairs, where you have records of these chickens that are nested in traps so you know how many eggs they produce in one year. Which was, in the twenties and in the thirties and into the forties, a great business.

When we moved from the second house to the third house, we had lived on two pieces of property that were rental that were only two to three acres, but we moved further up the street to eleven acres of property. Eventually, I can't remember, one of the years where the economy was not so good, he lost five acres of this. But he had a poultry ranch, and we had as high as 10,000 chickens on this place. We went from Rhode Island Reds to Leghorns because of egg production. We were in the business for the selling of eggs to the Los Angeles market.

But, other than the ten years that he was a field man for Congressman Voorhis, we always had Rhode Island Reds on the place. Although I know that I am totally prejudiced, I have gone to the Los Angeles County Fair from 1927 until now, and

WATSON: I never have believed that anybody has raised any more good-looking Rhode Island Reds than my father did. They were beautiful birds. Also, he bred for egg production besides their good looks, so in 1936 we must have had 5,000 chickens. In 1946, we were down to not more than fifty, fifty-five Rhode Island Reds on the property. And then, from '46 to '55, he built the flock back up again.

In the middle-fifties, he kept telling my mother he was going to get out of the business. But the day he dropped dead, there were 2,500 chickens on the place regardless. I had to go to Baldwin Park to take care of them. No one else was around to handle this. That turned out to be the hottest August and September we ever had in the history of the city of Los Angeles. It went up to 118 degrees, and there was a rip-roaring fire in San Dimas Canyon. In San Dimas, an entire poultry ranch had thousands of chickens which died from heat.

DOUGLASS: You always lived on the property where the poultry business was?

WATSON: Oh, yes. Probably 1916 until the day he died in '55. There was nine-tenths of an acre left that my mother lived on when he died. In 1955, nine-tenths of an acre sold, in January of 1956, for a flat \$10,000 cash.

The town had been talking about incorporation for years. My father was beginning to have a problem because the dairy back of us, which was ninety-one acres, had been subdivided and was now being built totally into residential, fifty-foot lots and so forth. And there had been a couple of petitions to try and rezone where you could not raise chickens. Up to the time of his death, he had been able to prove to the county sanitation [district] that he was within the law. He fought incorporation with every bit of ability in politics that he had. It was an unincorporated town.

Six months after his death, the town incorporated. Within the year, they had a recall of a portion of their councilmen. [Laughter] Oh, yes, they had fun. My brother and sister and I would kind of smile at each other and thought, "Well, wherever Jack was, he had to be kind of chuckling over the whole affair."

DOUGLASS: People don't realize that the poultry business was quite an ongoing activity. That is, your father was not unique. There were many people in the business.

WATSON: No. The poultry business was within a portion of West Covina, Baldwin Park, and it seems to me

the east side of El Monte, if my memory serves me well. It runs in cycles, as does everything else, and you would have a couple of years where it was quite lucrative. At that stage of the game, you would have city people coming out into the smaller areas to get away from downtown, metropolitan Los Angeles. They would go into the chicken business without ever having any background. Within three to four years you had a bad year, and then many would lose their property. You had your ups and downs, as apparently you have in practically anything. It runs in cycles.

I can remember in my elementary school days, we were classified as "poor." You would think that practically everybody that runs for public office today either came from total well-to-do families or abject poverty. It seems to be a criteria to be poor. We were never poor in terms of not having adequate to eat, but, by the same token, we were poor in terms of being able to have many of the niceties. I can remember, I think it was fifth grade, where I had exactly two school dresses from September to June.

On the other hand, you had adequate eggs, and you had adequate chickens. We ate chickens when you could not afford, because you did not have the cash, red meat out of the town meat

WATSON: market. But you had property, and my father was an excellent gardener. He did what is called today truck gardening. He would raise enough where he could sell to one or the other town grocery stores. That, and also dahlias to the town florist. We always had a garden that would have two or three rows of flowers right down between cantaloupe, sweet yams and possibly bell peppers, and tomatoes. He was basically a farmer. He understood and liked soil.

DOUGLASS: And he was an industrious man.

WATSON: This is true.

DOUGLASS: Did the depression have a drastic effect on his business?

WATSON: The depression. I don't remember it being such a dreadful time, and I guess for two reasons. My husband was in the motion picture industry. He was a projectionist. He went from Baldwin Park to the Garfield Theater in Alhambra. From there he went to RKO [Radio-Keith-Orpheum Studios]. The motion picture industry in the late twenties and the thirties was the fifth largest industry in the nation, and it knew no depression. People spent their ten or fifteen or twenty-five [cents], whatever it was to go to a theater in order to be able to not have to think about their problems. So, I realize that as far as being truly affected as far as the

tragedy of the great depression, we didn't have it.

I can remember in school that we would have butter rather than margarine, but it was very carefully used for sandwiches for the three of us for our lunches that we took to school. We were at no time with inadequate food. You had to be awfully careful of your clothing. I look back today and wish that both my children and my grandchildren had the appreciation of the care for their wardrobe that I had. I can remember the day when my mother simply went to the back porch and stood on the step, and she called, no matter where my brother and I were, if we had not come in and changed our clothes and hung them up. She didn't have the money. She simply would spend the time of calling us, and we came in from wherever we were. We were reprimanded, and we hung our clothing up.

It seems like it was dreadful at the time, but I recognize that I am a more disciplined person throughout my lifetime for that. I didn't do it nearly as well with my own children. I am certainly not doing as well with grandchildren. There is a leniency that I realize today is not good. You don't do your children a great favor by trying to give them all the things that you felt you were denied.

WATSON: You just really do not. You live a whole lifetime before you finally realize there is such a thing as discipline, and it is good for you. And, in our family it was known as "character development."

I was the one who always got the spanking because I always talked out of turn. It didn't make any difference if I knew I was going to be disciplined, I did talk. My sister just hated it. You could reason and you could threaten her, and she behaved. On a couple of things she had to do that she disliked very much she was overheard by our mother muttering, "Well, she supposed she had to do that because it was good for developing your character." I am now known as "Mother" Watson and I am inclined to shake the index of my left hand and say, "Now, young man," or "now, young lady." And that is now known among my young people as Mother Watson's character building.

DOUGLASS: [Laughter] That is pretty good. Well, let's go back to your father. When do you first remember his being interested in political things? What are your earliest recollections of politics being on the agenda in your household?

WATSON: I think I was in high school, but I am not really sure of it. There was another era in

which my father was involved in something besides the poultry business. In World War I, he took over a grocery because the owner was a Canadian, and he went back to Canada to be a flyer in the Canadian forces to go to England. From there, for a time, this had to be between 1918 and 1921, he also worked for a grocery store in Owensmouth which is the far end of the Fernando Valley.

DOUGLASS: O-W-E-N-S. Owens.

WATSON: Yes. I am trying to think what town it is today. It is in the far end of the San Fernando Valley, and I believe it is called Chatsworth now. He was gone the full week. He drove a spring wagon. It would take most of a day to get there. He would get back on late Friday night, be home on Saturday and Sunday, and work like mad at home and be gone again. I don't really have a recollection of how long that carried on.

Somewhere within this town of Baldwin Park and its philosophies of how you taught children, you had the problem of the integration of the Mexican-American children. In our day, they were simply classified as "Mexicans." You didn't bother with all these additional names we have today for identification. Irwindale was heavy with Mexicans. Baldwin Park, as against

the residency of Covina, was classified as a "poor" town. The economic level was not as good.

There was always a difference of opinion between the businessmen and my father. I don't remember what the clique of men were, other than the editor of the Baldwin Park Bulletin, which was the weekly town paper. That man was what you would classify today as a "liberal." There was a department store. A couple of grocery stores. There was the water district. The man who controlled that had a large acreage in the north end of Baldwin Park which was a large orange grove. The real estate people. They were the people who belonged to the Rotary Club and Chamber of Commerce. It seems to me that my father did belong to the Chamber of Commerce, but he was not of the "in" clique.

There are two things that I can remember at like about eighth grade and then going into Covina High School. Where the daughters of those businessmen didn't always decide to let me join with them. This would have been like from age ten to thirteen. The reaction was "You're Jack Long's daughter. And my daddy does not like your daddy." I had no understanding then, but I guess as we analyze it today, that is

WATSON: probably my firsthand knowledge of discrimination.

I do remember my father coming home late one afternoon with what was known as a small spring wagon. One horse. The horse and a portion of the wagon and my dad were pretty well covered with green paint. It was a very interesting sight. We lived north of the tracks on the west side of town, and this was to the east going towards Covina. And he had gotten into a discussion with a gentleman who, I think, was a real estate broker. I am not quite sure. But, anyway, it apparently became a rather heated discussion. This gentleman simply picked up the bucket of paint--he was painting a fence along his property--and in anger just threw it at my father. It splattered all over him. Dad came home with forest green paint all over the wagon and horse.

DOUGLASS: I gather your father was not a physical person. He didn't go and punch him or anything?

WATSON: No. My father was not. As time went on, I find it interesting. . . . Though we were schooled. We conformed to the things that were required of us at school. We were sent to the community Methodist church. We went religiously as we got into adulthood. I don't remember either my mother or father being inside that church, other

than an event which the children were all involved in, a funeral, or a wedding.

I have no recollection of my father every expounding on religion. Ever. Other than we had drilled into us that you treated people as how you wish to be treated. And that you considered the fact that you were fortunate, there were always people, he would carefully point out, who did not have things that were nearly as convenient as what you had. And you were expected to share. As a result, you were reminded of that frequently. But there was no story in terms of basic religion as you get told about it today.

As a result, I am aware of the fact that I always talked too much and the fact that I was not the daughter of what was considered the "social unit." Even to the extent that my mother was very much respected within the Women's Club, there was still a difference of opinion between the "ladies" and the membership as a whole. On the other hand, my mother did not make any effort to involve herself in what would be classified as the "social acts." First of all, she didn't participate in a church. She did not participate in a lodge. And she only participated in the things that happened in the Baldwin Park Women's Club.

WATSON:

So, in the social area, we were never particularly involved. I really don't know whether my brother and sister have this same feeling, I was aware of it by virtue of about five young ladies that were, I would say from age ten or eleven . . .

[End Tape 1, Side A]

[Begin Tape 1, Side B]

WATSON: . . . of the same social group that they were in.

I was coming home from school in eighth grade. We had a ballgame or something, and I crossed the street in the center of town about five o'clock one evening. I was hit by a couple of Mexicans who had too much to drink. I had looked across the street. There were a lot of people parked at this intersection. It was right where the Pacific Electric [Railway] cars stopped in town. It was an odd intersection because, if I remember correctly, it was double the Pacific Electric tracks, and the other street ran north and south. I had looked and saw this car, which I thought was going to park. They were coming fast enough that they could not park.

They came right on up the street, and I was hit. There was a young woman who still lives in Covina. She married the son of one of the doctors there. She was out of school because she broke her collarbone. I had been banged up. My teeth were knocked out. Arm broken. Ribs cracked.

DOUGLASS: You really were badly injured.

WATSON: I was really injured because I was hit by this car and thrown under a parked car on a gravel

road. I was kind of a mess. As a result of that, whatever you get as far as street maintenance is concerned with the county, Baldwin Park then acquired crosswalks.

[Laughter]

DOUGLASS: But you paid for it.

WATSON: Yes. I did pay a high price. But, by the same token, all the eighth graders in Mrs. [] Nation's class had to write notes. The class was divided, and you had to have get-well letters written. I had those for years, and I often looked them over. You could pretty well tell those who were doing this simply as an English-lesson requirement. And those who possibly knew me and at least halfway liked me. You could tell by the manner in which they were written.

DOUGLASS: Why was your father considered different? Did he express himself differently?

WATSON: He was what we would call today a liberal. He firmly believed that all children, regardless of what their background or heritage, should have the opportunity for education. He was part of the--I can't quite remember what they are called--councils that would do these things. When I went to high school, you had to wear midis [midi-blouses] and skirts from at least September to Easter vacation. The reason for it

was so that there would not be quite so much differentiation between the attire of those children coming from lower economic [homes] as against, basically, Covina, which was economically of a higher bracket.

As I said to you before, in these council meetings or whatever they were, my dad got into the trouble with Mr. [Sam] Walker mainly because his remark was, "If you educate them, then you have to pay them more to pick your fruit." The oranges and lemons. From my father's viewpoint, there was nothing illogical about that.

DOUGLASS: Was this when your father was on the school board?

WATSON: Around that time, as I remember it.

DOUGLASS: Was he on a couple of years?

WATSON: It seems to me that he was there at least four years, but I really don't remember if it was more. I have a feeling he may have been two terms, but I could be wrong.

DOUGLASS: What I was curious about is the forum through which people knew what he thought was partly the school board, partly in the Chamber of Commerce? He expressed himself.

WATSON: Yes. Well, even then we are back in the thirties, because part of the problem, in terms of what is known today in history books as the "Great Depression," it was just a depression as

far as I am concerned. That is all it was from '29 to '36. I had left home in '31 and gone into the city, and married in '32. So I was not as closely involved in it as my sister was. Other than you were aware that you could pick up the paper, the city paper or your town weekly paper, where you found any number of the businessmen who were commuting to Los Angeles, and they had either hung themselves on a walnut limb in a walnut orchard in West Covina or El Monte, or they had jumped out of window on Spring Street. And we had a number of suicides in that day.

And from '36, my father was involved with the political activity where Jerry Voorhis became the congressman. The old Twelfth Congressional District was from Indiana Street, which was the city border for the city of Los Angeles. East side. That congressional district went from there to the county line on the other side of Pomona, where San Bernardino County begins. It was the entire San Gabriel Valley. My recollection is that these were all not incorporated cities. You had all these small towns, and you had about twenty-five weekly newspapers.

I went to Washington D.C. with my parents and my sister in the spring of '37. None of us

WATSON: had ever been East. I had been to Iowa. That was the extent of my travels up to that time. We went to Washington because my father was field representative to a freshman congressman. Again, I was just sitting in the gallery of congress, and I was infuriated to listen to the congressman from New York speak of California as though it still belonged to the Indians and was uncivilized. And you were going to take these totally uncivilized, illiterate people, and you were having to subsidize them with WPA [Works Progress Administration] and PWA [Public Works Administration]. Heaven knows all the initials Roosevelt had.

Congressman Hamilton Fish was orating on the floor of congress, and I was sitting in the gallery, and in my typical fashion, I didn't keep my mouth shut. I can remember my mother grabbing me and telling me that I had to be quiet. I was utterly incensed to think that we were supposed to be just literally illiterate, west of the Rocky Mountains. [Laughter] There are days when I think the easterners still think that way about Californians.

DOUGLASS: I am curious as to how suddenly, in '37, when Jerry Voorhis takes office, your father is the field deputy. Not suddenly, but what was the connection?

WATSON: Well, the connection was, as far as our family is concerned, no matter what other people may tell you, and I have wondered what other oral histories say about the same thing. . . . It is like an accident. If you have five people looking at it, you got five totally different versions. My father became the field deputy for this freshman congressman because in reality he had been the campaign manager of that campaign.

DOUGLASS: How did he happen to know Voorhis? What political movement was he swept up in that attracted him to Voorhis?

WATSON: Actually, I can't give you an answer. At that stage of the game, I am in Los Angeles, and, on the fifth day of January of '36, I am delivering my first child.

DOUGLASS: Ah, you are busy.

WATSON: Yes. My interests were quite a bit different than my sister's, who was single and living at home. And my brother, who was also single, I think. I am not quite sure where he was. So I can't tell you what kind of activity my father was in. I know he was on the Democratic county central committee.

DOUGLASS: All right. Had he been on for some time?

WATSON: Yes. Because he had served in the Los Angeles Democratic County Central Committee from 1932 to

1952. As to what he had been doing in this area, I really don't know as to what kind of activity. I know that one time he belonged to the Hollywood Democratic Club, which in the thirties had a membership of around 5,000 people, that took in everything south of the Tehachapi Mountains. They had membership all over southern California in that day.

DOUGLASS: Do you know if he was active enough in Upton Sinclair's EPIC [End Poverty in California] campaign?

WATSON: I know that he was interested because I can remember his quoting Upton Sinclair on many things. I also know that--this is the forties--Culbert [L.] Olson went in as governor in . . .

DOUGLASS: In '38.

WATSON: From '38 to '42. He was active in that, but that would have been, I suppose, as a county committeeman.

DOUGLASS: Where would you put him politically? I am talking about Upton Sinclair. Was your father more like Sinclair? That is, a real liberal Democrat.

WATSON: I really believe that my father was a true liberal. As I say, [that is] the best that I can say today, and I really believe that he believed more in terms of what a socialist believes. He never was anything other than a

registered Democrat. He did not go with the IPP [Independent Progressive Party]. I have to stop and think. That was the fifties, because that was the [Henry A.] Wallace problem. He believed in Henry Wallace. I remember that. But he also recognized that. . . . I remember his remarking that he knew that the Communist party had infiltrated that unit to the place where Henry Wallace had literally lost control of his own destination because of the other element in there. He never went that far at any time.

DOUGLASS: Upton Sinclair was a socialist and had determined to be a part of the Democratic party.

WATSON: Upton Sinclair. And I am trying to think of the other man who was so involved with the Hollywood Democratic Club and was considered a true liberal. But, as I say, I really don't remember.

DOUGLASS: Do you have any recollections about Voorhis' first campaign in 1935?

WATSON: No. In reality, I do not. In that particular campaign, I would venture to say that my sister has a far better understanding of that than I do. She was single. She lived at home.

DOUGLASS: Were you particularly surprised that your father was appointed Jerry Voorhis' field deputy?

WATSON: No. Because **at the** time, we knew that he had given **literally all** of his time to that campaign.

DOUGLASS: Had you met Jerry Voorhis at that point?

WATSON: I don't remember. I have no recollection of my paying attention to him in '36. Mr. Voorhis wanted my father to come to Washington. I do know that in April or May of '37--because my child, [Robert A.] Bob [Watson], was only fifteen months old--I had this opportunity, because this was going to be about a three-and-a-half to four-week trip, because we drove.

DOUGLASS: You drove.

WATSON: We drove. My mother didn't drive, and neither did I. But my sister, who had been driving from age twelve, and my father did the driving. And this was the trip which was to go down to El Paso and New Orleans and then come north. We wanted to see the Tennessee Valley project. And then we crossed from there to the Virginias and Pennsylvania. We were one full week in Washington.

DOUGLASS: Seeing Voorhis sworn in?

WATSON: No. It was after that. It was in order to see the environment of congress. Because it was a case of seeing the Smithsonian Institute [Institution] and the Supreme Court building, which was a nine-million-dollar project which

was a boondoggle of the first degree, so they said in that day. [Laughter] We came back just south of Chicago. We went through Salt Lake [City]. And then down home.

We were gone about three-and-a-half weeks. I think it was close to a total of eight thousand miles in driving. My mother-in-law, Sue [Carter] Watson, lived with me for ten years. She was handicapped with muscular dystrophy. I located a young woman and hired her to live in the home for the time I was gone, because I was leaving a fifteen month-old child that my mother-in-law could not totally handle. He was on his feet and had been traveling since he was ten months old. So you had to have somebody to keep track of him. This was my first real trip to the capital of the United States.

DOUGLASS: Was it exciting to you?

WATSON: Oh, yes. Fascinating. The whole trip was. It was in the spring of the year. Being raised in Los Angeles County, I was absolutely fascinated by the beauty of the other states that have seasons. In the south, the hyacinths in the bayous were absolutely magnificent. Further east, the dogwood in the Allegheny Mountains. And the tulips in Pennsylvania grew like weeds

in people's yards. I never had seen anything like it in my life. It was just magnificent.

It was also interesting because this was 1937. I did not get back to Washington until January of 1961 in the [President] John [F.] Kennedy inauguration. A rip-roaring blizzard. It was fascinating to see the difference of Washington D.C. from what had been redone, torn down, and refinished, and this kind of thing. Decided difference. The White House under Eleanor Roosevelt, and the White House under Mrs. [Jacqueline B.] Kennedy was a very, very interesting comparison.

DOUGLASS: I'll bet. Did your father have someone else run the poultry business? Was being the field deputy that kind of job?

WATSON: In that ten years, supposedly he was going out of the chicken business. It diminished each year to, as I say, by 1946--the Richard [M.] Nixon-Voorhis campaign of '46, which was the beginning of Richard Nixon's political career--I don't think there was more than probably fifty, sixty [chickens]. At that stage of the game getting back to Rhode Island Reds and, I don't know, a peacock or two. We always had something of the sort on this piece of property.

DOUGLASS: He was full time.

WATSON: Yes. He was totally full time.

DOUGLASS: How much of a staff did he have in the beginning, and by '46?

WATSON: As far as I know, he had a part-time secretary the whole ten years, as far as I can find out. That is, in the California area. I have no idea of what went on in Washington. As I hear people talk about it today, there are innumerable people who tell you they were on Voorhis' staff. This means they had to have been in Washington. I don't know whether it was a case that their term was only of a short time or whether it [staff] increased.

I know there is no comparison to staff then and staff today, as to how you think you must service people. And, yet, they don't have much more, in terms of the number of people, because we went from twenty-some-odd congressmen up to forty-five, for heaven sakes. You are supposed to be still keeping your constituency from half or three-quarters of a million people.

I only know that dad would get so backlogged. These town newspapers would come in, and they were supposed to have the marriage notices and the baby notices cut out so that you could send the well-baby booklets, et cetera. Anyway, there are pamphlets from the [federal] Department of Agriculture, they still exist

today just as they did then, and you were supposed to be mailing them out to those people in your district. I can't remember, but they are still from the Department of Agriculture. The type of pamphlets that were available to the new bride and this kind of thing. And there would be just sacks of this stuff at home on La Rica Avenue on the front porch. And I would go home--in 1940, when Bob was four--in the summertime, and my sister and I would help bail our father out of this backlog of material.

DOUGLASS: From Los Angeles.

WATSON: Yes. I would go out for a week at a time and just stay with the child. You didn't have to worry about a street and a sidewalk or whether you were going get run over. It was still fairly rural. I helped out.

DOUGLASS: You helped mail things out?

WATSON: Yes. This was 1940 to '46. Margaret [Watson] was born in '40. By this time, I am thirty years old. My brother went into the service, went into the army. My sister went into the coast guard. My husband enlisted in the coast guard, in '42. And I had a two-year old and a seven-year old. I was obsessed with the idea that I was not giving as much contribution to the war effort as they were. I volunteered to the American Red Cross as a nurse's aid. Between

thirty and thirty-five, I learned to put into twenty-four hours what the average three women could do. I had excellent health by that time. I was a driver. I learned how to use every hour of twenty-four hours. I have been a pain in the neck to everybody since. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: You discovered these resources. What did you do with your children, at that time?

WATSON: From the time Bob was eight months old, for ten years, my mother-in-law lived with me.

DOUGLASS: So you had help in?

WATSON: No. I had no help. I had a sister-in-law who also lived with me. In '42, when Richard [Watson] went into the coast guard, we were hung up somewhere with the dear government. We were studio people who got a weekly check and spent it just as fast as it came in. And the government check got hung up for six months. About the tenth day of December 1942, I suddenly realized we might not have any Christmas unless I could find work. I had gotten married at twenty. I had not worked. I got married right in the middle of a class on dressmaking and designing at Frank Wiggins Trade School.

DOUGLASS: Oh, really.

WATSON: By Easter vacation, found an apartment, cleaned it up. Came home, made my mother a dress. Took care of the house there and had a wedding of 300

people on **March** 27, 1932. And was back in school at **ten** o'clock on Monday morning. I never missed a day of school. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: You finished school.

WATSON: Oh, yes. I certainly did.

DOUGLASS: How long did you go to school?

WATSON: It was twelve months. I finished it. I never worked at **dressmaking** professionally. That is, in the working world. I did not. I find that, interestingly enough, fifty-some-odd years later, this served me excellently. I was an excellent pattern drafter. Mechanically, mathematically, I understood that part of it excellently. I never worked at it. But I can tell you, today--I work for a probate referee--I can draw beautifully to scale lines of houses that these two men bring in and have to put together. Because it is strictly mathematical.

DOUGLASS: And you also have an eye for proportion.

WATSON: You have to work on graphpaper. But I do a nice job. I went to work on this job in 1975 with the idea of working two or three years to improve my social security. That was in 1975, and this is 1988 and I am still there, loving every minute of it. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: Let's pick up a couple of threads here. One is that you finished high school. Was it right after school that you went to this school?

WATSON: No. I ~~started~~ at Chaffey Junior College in Ontario at ~~that~~ time. I was there either six weeks or two months, when I came home and discovered that my mother was ill. I had a brother one year younger than I am who was finishing Covina High School. And I had a sister who was in elementary school. I learned how to ~~take~~ care of a house, and I learned to cook. In November of 1931, just before I was eighteen, I learned the long and hard fast way. So for a year, a year and a half, I worked in a florist shop.

DOUGLASS: Your mother got better?

WATSON: Ultimately, she did get better. But we had these other two members. My father could not handle all of this. So I came home. I worked in a doctor's home for six months with three small children. Lived in the home and worked in that fashion.

My mother never did get over that problem. It is fascinating to see what people think they are entitled to today. Of course, I had room and board. I got twenty dollars a month. Because at the end of three months, I had sixty dollars in cash, just before Christmas of 1930. I blew the entire sixty dollars in buying Christmas presents. I had the most marvelous time I ever expect to have. It was delightful.

DOUGLASS: Sixty dollars was quite a bit.

WATSON: Sixty dollars bought a great deal. When my mother died, I dismantled the house and found the handbag I had purchased for her in 1930. It just overwhelmed her. She never could get over the fact that I had just blown this whole thing. She never understood that I had had an absolute field day doing it.

DOUGLASS: To her, that was just blowing it.

WATSON: Yes. She just never could understand. It is the same kind of thing that every once in a while members of my family jump me now. I work. I really don't intend to take any of it with me. And, if possible, I don't intend to leave anything either.

DOUGLASS: Maybe that was a little piece of the headstrong, young woman she was?

WATSON: Oh, I am convinced of this. The thing that was interesting. My mother and I clashed unmercifully. I never could truly appreciate my mother prior to, probably, the last five years of her life. There was really not compatibility. And, yet, I was the one who allowed her to live vicariously. I came home and reported anything I did, where I went, what everybody wore, what everybody ate, what was served, how the house was. All of this. And

she loved it. She could not hardly get a word out of the other two or expression.

DOUGLASS: You represented excitement.

WATSON: Yes. Fundamentally, we clashed.

DOUGLASS: But you were both alike, I bet.

WATSON: I would not be surprised. But I was classified as rattlebrained and harum-scarum. I was convinced in my mind that I could take care of myself. The rest of them were sure I could not.

DOUGLASS: Were you close to your father?

WATSON: Yes. The political side of these things. As I grew older after the children [grew up], I was into the PTA when Bob was five. And weathered it all the way through. Two kids, five years apart. I did eleven years with Camp Fire Girls. I am the only one who took a group of youngsters, Blue Birds at age seven, and carried them right straight through to eighteen.

DOUGLASS: That is devotion.

WATSON: On the other hand, I had four young, eighteen year-old ladies in 1948, who were out of high school and who asked me to go with them--four girls, mind you, that were as boy conscious as they could ever come--across to Catalina [Island] with them that year. I thought that was a nice honor for my eleven years.

DOUGLASS: That certainly is a compliment. Well, I want to bring this up a little more. A couple of

things. One, you said in '42, you went out and got a job.

WATSON: Yes.

DOUGLASS: There was a hangup on your check. This was just before Christmas. What was the job you had?

WATSON: Well, I took a look at the Los Angeles Times want ads, and May Company wanted extra help for Christmas. I picked myself up one morning and went downtown on a bus. I didn't drive. As a result of an accident at thirteen, it was a hangup all the way through. I did not learn to drive. I went downtown and applied for a job. The woman who interviewed me took a look at me and she said, "Do you anticipate working any longer than just the Christmas rush?" I said, "I don't know. I need the money." She said, "Would you consider it?" And I said, "I would consider anything that would give me an income." She said, "Do you like books?" I said, "I certainly do."

Anyway, by the time I filled out a form, she hired me into their lending library, which turned out to be the largest library outside of the Los Angeles [City] public library that we are now going to rebuild. It had the largest circulation of anything in town. Almost all of the big stores had lending libraries at that

time. There was also another interesting thing. It had four women working in the area. I was the fifth one. It was the only department within the store that I know of--at May Company, Eighth [Street] and Broadway [Street]--that was all Gentile. The woman who was the supervisor was a Canadian woman.

You got up in the morning, took care of your two children, got them off to nursery school, and so forth. You went down on Beverly Boulevard, and you boarded a bus. You got off at Eighth and Hill [Street]. You went in on the Hill Street side of May Company. You went up to the eighth floor, punched a time clock, and you were there at five minutes of nine. You went back and punched that time clock out at six o'clock. And you worked six days a week, or forty-eight hours, for eighteen dollars a week. And you came home, and you managed a six-room house. And you worried about the gardening. If there was any plumbing or electrical work, you took care of it.

DOUGLASS: There was no dishwasher then, was there?

WATSON: Of course not. You handled these things. You learned how to use twenty-four hours. I lasted there until summer, and I could not figure out what to do with Robert. He was then out of school. My mother did call me and tell me that

~~she~~ would take him for the summer. I lost about fifteen pounds. I could not gain back the weight.

DOUGLASS: Meanwhile, I take it that the check was at least coming in from the coast guard.

WATSON: Yes. That came in. Well, ultimately, that came, too. But it wasn't until into the spring of the year.

DOUGLASS: A long time.

WATSON: Yes. It seems to me that he went in August. Ultimately, it came through. Anyway, I quit. I could not handle the commuting, the forty-eight-hour week, and all of the wear and tear that went with managing a household.

DOUGLASS: Was this tough, in a sense, that your mother-in-law did not have any particular resources to contribute to the home? Did you have to carry her, too?

WATSON: Only in the terms of the fact it was our home. It was a three-bedroom house.

DOUGLASS: Well, I meant, income or medical expenses.

WATSON: She had no income. That is correct. But I can tell you, this woman read to my children to the day she died in 1949.

DOUGLASS: So, they probably had a close relationship with her.

WATSON: Yes. Margaret learned to walk with her hands up

like **this**. [Makes a gesture with her hands] It was as if she was walking on eggs, exactly the way **her** grandmother was walking in order to keep herself balanced. Mimicked her perfectly.

Learned to bring her diaper and crawl up in her grandmother's lap when she needed to be changed. Oh, **the** reading she did for those children gave **them a** foundation that very few children in the **city of** Los Angeles ever had. I am forever grateful to her.

DOUGLASS: Not many people have a nice live-in grandmother.

WATSON: No. She was a delightful woman. She washed all the dishes, thank God. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: So you all pulled together.

WATSON: Yes.

DOUGLASS: So, you quit the job that summer, and you did not work for a while.

WATSON: Just for the summer. By this time, I had learned how to do an awful lot of things. In the neighborhood, the corner of Van Ness [Avenue] and Melrose [Avenue], there was a large market, Jerry's Market. A big one. In it was a Van De Kamp's bakery. They wanted a part-time employee. I thought that this would be delightful. I could walk from the house to Van Ness Avenue. To the day-care center and school and so forth. I could walk three more blocks to Jerry's Market. I went to work for three days a

week. ~~This~~ was in '43. And, in '47, when I quit, I was the manager of that unit.

DOUGLASS: Let me ask you a question. Was there a day-care center because it was wartime?

WATSON: Yes.

DOUGLASS: Because it was not typical. When you became manager, were you working full time?

WATSON: Oh, yes. I was working full time. By this time, Richard Watson was back home. He had come in from the South Pacific. He came in the latter part of '47. He was back home. He went back to work. We were within walking distance of RKO, and he went back to work there. And, by this time, mother and Helen were going to move into an area unto themselves. So they would be separate.

DOUGLASS: Your own mother?

WATSON: No. This is my mother-in-law and her younger daughter, who was an unmarried young woman at that time, too.

DOUGLASS: Had her daughter been living with you, too?

WATSON: Oh, yes. In '34, we had gone to Iowa and brought this young woman back to California. She was eighteen. She went through Woodbury Business College.

DOUGLASS: What year did you bring her to the house?

WATSON: In 1934.

DOUGLASS: So **you** had a fairly good-sized group at home.

WATSON: We **had** four adults at home. And, ultimately, for a short time, we had four adults and the two children.

DOUGLASS: Let me go back so we can keep this in chronological context. Were you ever involved, **or** do you have any comments to make, because of **your** father's involvement in the '46 Voorhis campaign?

WATSON: Yes. There are several things that I know to be true that other people don't particularly recognize. Jerry insisted upon being involved in the debates. As far as I know, my father thought this was a mistake. Because there was a problem that he had to defend his actions of ten years. And the young man had nothing to defend. If I learned anything on that, you do not get into face-to-face debates when there are all sorts of ramifications as to why you did certain things in the manner of legislation.

It is the art of compromise. Very few people understand the process. Frequently, compromise--when they are twenty or thirty, and even forty [years of age], and a few people clear until their death--is my giving up just ten percent of what I want, and forcing you to give up ninety. And the longer I live, the more I know that compromise is forty-nine and fifty-

one. It truly is. You finally get yourself so close to fifty, that you kind of wonder if you are really selling your soul. But you don't really learn that, as far as I can tell, until you have lived a long time on this earth.

[Laughter]

DOUGLASS: You ~~can~~'t explain that quickly in a public ~~form~~.

WATSON: No. You do not.

DOUGLASS: Your father had advised him against that?

WATSON: My recollection is that is what he had done. The thing that was so frustrating about it was this great game of taking things out of context. I have often wondered what the records and papers of Jerry Voorhis say because Jerry's book is an interesting report. The book he wrote after he was defeated. I think there is only a paragraph that refers to my father in it. I don't know why. I know that it made my mother and sister, I don't know about my brother, indignant. I have never really known why there was so little said. I have lived long enough to know that you very rarely get credit for much of what you do. My father was almost covered with psoriasis when that campaign was over. He was literally a wreck.

DOUGLASS: Had he had a problem with that all along?

WATSON: Yes. There is a psoriasis in the family because it shows up in a daughter and a granddaughter. And a great-granddaughter.

DOUGLASS: He was a mess?

WATSON: Yes. The family has always thought that the last campaign had aged him about ten years. But you can't prove those things.

DOUGLASS: Was it from the spring to November?

WATSON: It was just a constant thing. It was the smear by association and the out of context. If nothing else, it certainly taught me that you can take a sentence, and the sentence itself says one thing. You put it in a paragraph and it means something entirely different. You take it to the full page, and you discover that its meaning has an entirely different context. It appears to have a different meaning. So that it was artfully done. And the young man was quite capable of making good speeches. This was the type of campaign.

Jerry was tired. And labor did what it has been known to do down through the ages. "What have you done for me today?" Not what you have done for me in the past. I think the story was it was about two major votes of the '46 or '45 session, I don't know which, that labor didn't like, and they really condemned him. It was the operating engineers in the valley that were the

ones who sat on their hands.

DOUGLASS: Was this local organizations?

WATSON: No. Operating engineers.

DOUGLASS: Why? Because Jerry Voorhis had voted against them?

WATSON: There were two votes in congress that they didn't like. They didn't want.

DOUGLASS: They took it out on Voorhis.

WATSON: They were unforgiving. But the other problem, from my viewpoint, by '46, was Jerry's theory on money--and he had written several books on it--had the backing of at least seventy-five members of congress. From my viewpoint, both the banking industry and the insurance business wanted no part of his theory. None whatsoever.

DOUGLASS: Traditionally, locally, he had done well across-the-board in terms of business people and farm people.

WATSON: The thing that had happened to him, of course, was in the beginning, he apparently was able to hold a narrow Democratic edge, and when it came to a general election, it seems to me, my father said he had about 5,000 registered Republicans that voted for him. When the area was redistricted in '41, it was growing, and the district was divided. You got [Congressman] Chet Holifield's Nineteenth [Congressional

District]. And Voorhis' [district] became the Twenty-sixth Congressional District. It was no longer called the Twelfth.

Anyway, the valley grew enough that you had parts of the valley taken away. And the people that were coming in were new. It is the same old story. When you develop geographically, you develop with a different kind of people than you had in the beginning, and they want different things.

DOUGLASS: Status-quo people? Don't-rock-the-boat people?

WATSON: I don't really know. I didn't do a great deal of studying in the backgrounds of these people. I only know that it is just the same as my father being a poultryman on La Rica Avenue for fifty years. But, let me tell you, when you have the acreages of thirty acres here, twenty acres there, and ninety acres over here, all subdivided, then the story was that the man who had been there from 1920, he was the man that should go out of business. They wanted these city lots in the way they wanted them. People always do this thing. And the closer you put people together, the more difficult it is for them to live together.

You talk about our problems being so different. In reality, I don't think they are one bit different from one generation to

another. The problem is that geographically, in square miles, this country is no bigger today than it was in the 1700s. But you keep putting more people on a given number of square feet, and the closer you put them together, the more difficult it is for them to get along.

DOUGLASS: We are coming to the point where Europe has been for a long time. People piled on top of people.

WATSON: Of course. And they have lived like that for hundreds of years. And then they come to our country, and we don't accept their cultures and the manners in which they live. The most fascinating thing to me was my few days in the Netherlands to observe the size of the houses, whether they were middle class or well-to-do. And what they do literally with every square foot of land. And the wealthy do not have the magnitude of three thousand square feet in one house, for heaven's sake. They just don't have it.

DOUGLASS: To go back to your father. Voorhis was up for election every two years. Was your father, basically, running the campaign out here each time?

WATSON: Yes. That's right.

DOUGLASS: So, the one in '46 was unusual, a little bit different. The war was just over. Also, how

many times did Voorhis manage to get out here?
Was some of this on your father?

WATSON: There were other people involved. There were a
 number of other people involved.

[End Tape 1, Side B]

[Begin Tape 2, Side A]

WATSON: My sister traveled with my father a great deal. My mother became just weary. Her remark was that she could practically have quoted verbatim backwards any of the speeches. And if you travel with anybody, you know that is true. There is just a limit to how many words you can say, and it just gets to be rote. I have heard this with Mr. [Jesse M.] Unruh in two or three of his campaigns. I am aware of the problem. I don't have any recollection of my father making speeches.

I do know I learned a couple of things from him that he really imparted to me. He said, "Madale, if you really want to get anywhere, you never sit on the front row of any political meeting. And you just don't get in the line of a photographer's camera. You don't have your picture taken. You are not in the front row, and you don't get photographed." For anybody who has been in this game for forty years, or whatever it is that I have, I have probably as limited amount of newspaper articles or pictures of me as anybody in the game.

DOUGLASS: Now he was telling you not to do that if you want to stay in the business?

WATSON: If you want to be a good politician. That was his advice.

DOUGLASS: Don't be obvious.

WATSON: The other thing he said to me, this after the Voorhis defeat. I think these remarks were made in the [Stephen I.] Steve Zetterberg setup, which must have been into the fifties. We were talking one day, and I was carrying on about something, not being recognized. He said, "Madale, it is not necessary for anybody else to know. If you know you have done that which you set out to do, and if you have gotten it accomplished, and you know that you have gotten it accomplished, you don't need to have credit for it."

He named a man. He said that he came to the house all worked up. He said, "I wanted something and planted an idea with him. I talked about it to him, and he went off. In a couple of weeks, he came back, and he became very enthusiastic, with the whole idea." My father said, "I agreed with him, told him that it was an excellent idea. I would give him all the cooperation in the world. And he went off to do it." And I looked at my father and said, "It was your idea. You didn't get any credit for it." He said, "I wanted it accomplished. I know that it was done. That is all that is necessary."

DOUGLASS: Now where do you suppose your father learned that bit of wisdom?

WATSON: I don't know. I only know it took me another twenty years to finally learn how to do this and subordinate my own ego and be satisfied.

I suppose I should not put this on the record. But I have to say to you that I believe that I learned to use my father's advice. And I believe that I had a fair influence on Mr. Unruh. Because I learned to make remarks, like it or not like it, and frequently his chin would go out three-eighths of an inch. And then I learned also not to say, "I told you so," or "I told you this would happen." But to keep my mouth shut. And I never made an effort-- [unlike] prior to that, thirty years ago, when I was pretty obstreperous--I never, ever tried to outshine the man. As long as I didn't, as time went on, I have a feeling he did hear. Well, there is evidence that definitely my thoughts were listened to and they were used.

DOUGLASS: Don't you think, too, for a woman it is hard not to do that? I can think of myself as saying, "Well, I told you that."

WATSON: In the first ten years in the game, not only did I pull that stunt, but I have heard people say later, "Madale has so mellowed." Well, in reality, Madale has grown up and matured. I

have not mellowed as far as my ideas are concerned. Nor my desire to get them done. I have learned that you can't indulge your ego if you want something accomplished.

At the present time, I am old enough that I don't wish to be ignored. I consider it fairly complimentary that young people in their twenties and thirties have some affection and I think they have respect for me. I believe it is because I am able to give them background and history without just telling them they are utter fools, not dry behind their ears and ought to do it this way.

DOUGLASS: Well, somewhere in there did your attitude toward power change? I mean, I think that any person who is vital and active, part of recognition is a sense of power. When you were much younger, it sounds as though maybe you were hurt about not being recognized. And maybe this had to do with wanting to feel you had some power. Do you think there is anything in that? As contrasted to what you say is "maturing." Changing your attitude toward that.

WATSON: Well, when I finally arrived at the feeling that I was an intelligent, worthwhile person, without battling a rip-roaring, apparent inferiority complex--which also was very hard for me to

understand that extroverts are just as insecure as the people who are shy and bashful--I guess finding myself easier to live with made it a little easier to not try to aim for the top rung. So, when I decided that I had about had it along the way, in terms of all the things one does in working, doing the physical work of running a dinner or a campaign or establishing an organization, I took a look at the party structure and thought, "Well, am I going to go on an ego trip?" And in reality that is what it was.

Instead of trying to decide that I had to be the top woman of the party, I thought, "Well, I would like to be the treasurer of the party." That was in '71. I went to Jesse and said, "Do you know any reason why I should not be able to do this?" I had come through the '70 gubernatorial campaign with him. I was an office manager of the Jesse M. Unruh-for-Governor state headquarters, which was in the building that I am working in today. It was 10,000-and-some-odd square feet on the first floor. Keeping track of all of departments and people, the physical equipment and all materials for a statewide campaign.

In the fifties and sixties, originally I started to help with fund-raising dinners. The

WATSON: next thing I knew, I was putting them on, totally. Doing all the physical work with such people as young Joe Cerrell. In one of his early resumes, he stated he had handled the Democratic party fund-raising dinner for President Kennedy, saying he had done it singlehandedly. And I just laughed to myself. "Well, Joe, I wonder how you thought you could have done it without me." That's okay. I had learned by that time not to be so indignant about what the young folks did, as far as their own egos were concerned.

I am sure I had considerable help from Jesse on my campaign, and he made the nominating speech at the state committee. But I aimed at a level that was within reason of what I could do. It was an area that I understood as far as money and so forth. Jesse nominated me the first time. Speaker [Robert] Bob Moretti, much to Jesse's disgust, nominated me for the second term.

DOUGLASS: Oh, really.

WATSON: Oh, yes.

DOUGLASS: You had good support there.

WATSON: Jesse looked at me and wanted to know why I had done that. I said, "Well, he was the speaker." Because Jesse was out of office at that time.

It didn't set well that I was using somebody else. I served three terms.

Then I looked at all these women that I helped out. Such as Merlie Evers. Adele Leopold, who is the daughter of the woman who owned the New York Post. Anyway, helped these women go through their term of office and didn't ask for much in return.

I recognized that women who are, by and large, the chair of the party are women who have, either in their own right, or with their husbands, a good income, they are monetarily in the upper bracket. An individual of very ordinary means really does not have much of a chance of competing. I am of the middle class, economically. I have a husband who said, "You can do anything you want in politics, except I am not going to foot the bills." He had the perfect right to say that. That was why I, originally, went to work on a part-time basis, that is after we were at peace and not the war years. In order that I could have my own spending money.

So, I looked at the coming election in 1979 when Richard O'Neill, who is a multi-millionaire out of Orange County, had decided the year before he wanted to be state chair. He stumped the state on the theory of fund raising by the

WATSON: "little people." I thought, "Well, you don't aim for the very top. You go ahead and try to take the second position and be satisfied with it." I went to Richard O'Neill and I said to him, "Would you find it impossible to work with me if run for the vice chair, and could make it?" And he said, "Well, no." I didn't ask him if he could carry me. I already knew Richard O'Neill well enough that I didn't think this would appeal to him. So I didn't ask him that.

I won and it was interesting to find the rank-and-file black woman and the rank-and-file Mexican woman who were in that delegation come up and say to me, "Congratulations. Look, you have paid your dues. You earned it." Which I found very gratifying. So I was the vice chairman from '79 through '81.

DOUGLASS: We shall pick up that story later.

WATSON: It was for anybody just out of ordinary means. Basically, Carmen Perez, who comes from labor and works for Supervisor [Kenneth] Kenny Hahn said to me, "You know, Mother, I have decided that you set the precedent. By golly, a rank-and-file woman who has worked and worked and paid her dues is entitled to this. By golly, she ran, and she got it."

DOUGLASS: So, really it was two things. One, you were a woman. And another was that you didn't have a

lot of money, personal money. You were recognized.

WATSON: That's right.

DOUGLASS: You broke a trend.

WATSON: Yes. I apparently broke a trend. I figured those two years cost probably about \$3,500 a year. You had to have a somewhat different wardrobe than you normally would. You had to have money for travel expenses. You paid it yourself. Your party didn't pay for expenses.

DOUGLASS: You had to pay for that personally. You had to get around the state.

WATSON: If you thought that you should do it, and I did. I never talked issues. I will not do the homework and the research. I have got some ideas about some things, but I don't lecture on that. The only thing that I will really talk about, because I understand it, is the fact that the county committee people are voted by three different ways within the counties. There are fifty-eight counties in the state.

DOUGLASS: So you know procedure.

WATSON: I know procedure. I know what you do for voter registration and Get-Out-The-Vote and why. And I am perfectly willing to talk about it any day of the week, including giving my dear James Woods a whole lesson on procedure, and he

certainly needed it the other day. [Laughter]
He didn't have a background on it.

DOUGLASS: Well, maybe that is what a vice chairman ought to do?

WATSON: Well, it all depends. Depending upon on what you really think you need. This is the area which I understand. I understand what you have to do to try to get a piece of legislation enacted. I have worked in that area as far as the women's division was concerned, when we had a division. Which, in my opinion, we could go back to and do just as well as this equality thing that we have today. You introduce a gentleman as an "assemblyman" or as a "chairman" or this "gentleman" is so-and-so. When you get to a woman, then it is a "chairperson." Or an "assemblyperson." You leave a female with no sex, but you always refer to a man so that you know he is male. I resent it terribly. I don't see why you can't be classified as an "assemblywoman" or a "chairwoman." Just leave the sex off of it entirely if you have to.

DOUGLASS: Right.

WATSON: Eventually, you do finally say the gentle "congresswoman." And you do finally, once in a while, either talk about the fiery or the gentle "assemblywoman." But you get into the field and you are a "person." I really resent it. I have

stopped using either "Mrs." or "Ms." I just say "Madale Watson." Occasionally, my mail is addressed to "Mr. Madale Watson." They don't have the faintest idea where the name came from.

DOUGLASS: What is the origin of Madale?

WATSON: Well, Madale was the name of a heroine in a novel my mother was reading when she was pregnant. Allegedly, the heroine was of Norwegian extraction, but that may have been the author's figment of his imagination. And I don't know if it is pronounced correctly or not.

DOUGLASS: That is interesting. You were certainly a very active woman, well ahead of anybody today who is running around talking about being a liberated woman.

WATSON: Yes. I have to credit my husband for being very kind to me, letting me do as I well pleased. On the other hand, my husband traveled. From 1942, he was three years in the service. He came home and created an action camera for sports. And, in 1947, he obtained the photographic contract for the American Bowling Congress. And for the next thirty-five years, he traveled a portion of every year, the last fifteen he traveled six months out of each year.

By that time, the son and daughter were adults, and out and gone. I was a free agent,

and I could pretty well do what I wanted to do. There was a time when he was a little perturbed when he came home and I was up to my neck with all of these political activities. And I said, "Look, you don't care to have me travel with you. I can't be in politics just now and then, like you can perhaps in the PTA or the Ladies Aid. Either I have to stay in it, or I have to get out completely. And I have to tell you if you request me to get out completely, I am going to be very unhappy." He did not complain after that. So I went merrily on my way.

DOUGLASS: I want to go back and pick up a comment you made about bailing out Merlie Evers.

WATSON: Oh, dear.

DOUGLASS: Well, you also mentioned Mrs. Leopold. Since we are talking about women, it would be interesting to discuss that, if you are willing to.

WATSON: Well, Mrs. Evers became the women's division chair through a situation, if I remember correctly, of the '68, I think, delegation affair. She was backed by Stephen Reinhart. She came out of this area. She was living out in this area at that time. As she came into the office, I am trying to think, I may have my dates confused, but it seemed to me the things that needed to be done as the women's chair, and getting them done and getting notices out, she

did not apparently have the time to get these accomplished.

It seemed to me that I had done a great deal of preparation. I felt that I had given her a great deal of very stable advice. I don't really know whether it didn't impress her or whether it was unimportant or what. I felt as time went along. . . . I guess, what I am really saying is that she appeared to be rather indifferent.

DOUGLASS: And she took on, maybe, more than she realized?

WATSON: I felt she was truly unprepared. It may be that she didn't have the amount of time that was necessary to do things.

DOUGLASS: It could be the time she was working here at the [Claremont] University Center. She went back to college and lived here for a while. She may not have had the time.

WATSON: It is very possible.

DOUGLASS: She was just then moving back into the political arena. Well, for first time on her own. Then she later did run in Los Angeles, didn't she?

WATSON: Yes.

DOUGLASS: When she went to ARCO [Atlantic-Richfield Company].

WATSON: This has just been in the last couple of years.

DOUGLASS: Oh, I see. Recently.

WATSON: I had no contact with her before.

DOUGLASS: Well, at that time she had been with ARCO for some time.

WATSON: Yes. As far as Mrs. Leopold was concerned, she had a problem with being an easterner with the eastern proper appearance, which does not particularly go with the western attitude. And Mrs. [Carmen] Warschaw was the national committeewoman, and Carmen is a very intelligent politician. Sharp. And does not give easily, in terms of the pecking order. There were times when I felt that Adele didn't understand the intricacies of some of these things. And, as a native of this area, I thought I did. I gave her a lot of time and a lot of hard work.

DOUGLASS: So she could more acutely understand her relationship with Mrs. Warschaw, as an example?

WATSON: Yes. That kind of thing. Of the two women, in my opinion, Carmen Warschaw was by far the sharpest politician, in terms of the local environment. In fact, there are only three or four women that I have watched in the Democratic party. I have no knowledge of the Republicans, but in the Democratic party there are only three or four women that I have great admiration for.

DOUGLASS: Who would those be?

WATSON: Well, one is [Florence] Susie Clifton. Who had been in the picture clear back from the

thirties. In fact, she was involved in the beginning Voorhis campaign under my father. So was Carmen. Carmen and Louis Warschaw, in the thirties, were young Democrats out of Sierra Madre.

DOUGLASS: Oh, they were living there. I didn't know that.

WATSON: I think that is where they were from. And the late Ruth Lybeck, [] Ed Lybeck's wife. Who [Ed Lybeck] was the field man for [Congressman] James Roosevelt all the time he was a congressman. I considered Ruth the smarter politician of those two people. She didn't. She just thought Mr. Lybeck was an exceedingly smart man. Ruth was one of the few people who I truly admired. Ruth could always calm me down by just saying, "Now, Madale." And she was such a lady.

And Carmen, Carmen has to be really admired, as far as I am concerned. I don't think I get along real well with her. Mainly, I think, because I have always stood up to her. I am not sure that Carmen cared for that. That is beside the point. I have great respect for Carmen Warschaw. But, I think, probably those are about the only three women. It is showing my prejudices. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: Oh, no. I think you are a keen observer. I don't know a great deal about them. About Susie

Clifton or Ruth Lybeck, but I think it would be worth pursuing.

WATSON: Now, Ruth Lybeck is deceased. Both the Lybecks are deceased. I don't know whether Susie Clifton has been interviewed. If not, she should be. Susie's background goes clear back into the thirties. She worked diligently for [Governor] Culbert Olson and, of course, as far as the gossip is concerned, it was more or less her work, supposedly, that got Robert [Clifton] his first judgeship on the municipal court. She was a fund raiser for [Governor] Edmund [G.] Brown [Sr.] in '58 and, allegedly, Robert went to the superior court.

By the same token, the reason the Cliftons, in my mind, are to be admired, they went in the late sixties with the peace corps to the Micronesian Islands. They came home, and, in the middle seventies, they went to the country of Liberia for two years with the peace corps in Africa. Susie was seventy-eight years old in February, and Robert has to be eighty-two or eighty-three years old as of this year.

DOUGLASS: Now it was Susie Clifton who was involved with Culbert Olson's campaign?

WATSON: That's right.

DOUGLASS: When did you first meet her?

WATSON: In the women's division, clear back in the fifties. When [Elizabeth] Liz [Carlson] Snyder was the chairman of the party in '52, '54, somewhere along in that time.

DOUGLASS: What is it that you particularly admired about Susie Clifton during that period, in the party?

WATSON: I just thought that Susie understood politics thoroughly and had great loyalty. In the creation of the CDC, California Democratic Council of Clubs, which was in '53 as a result of the [Adlai E.] Stevenson campaign, the first campaign of his. Susie was the cochair in the Nineteenth Congressional District. And she was the director of the CDC. John Gaffney, a poultryman from Baldwin Park, was the cochair of the state committee from that district, the Twenty-fifth Congressional District. It was the old Voorhis district. He was also the CDC director. And Madale Watson was the same thing out of the old Fifteenth Congressional District, right in the heart of Hollywood. Right down the center. The old [Congressman Gordon L.] McDonough district.

Out of the southern half of the state, we were the only three CDC directors on the articles of incorporation of the CDC in '53 that were also the cochairs of the state central committee out of the congressional districts.

In the southern half of the state. Up north these things were quite different. And that is my first recollection of my contact with Susie. It was one of these things that just clicked, and my father would tell me of episodes about young Susie that were enjoyable.

DOUGLASS: He had known her?

WATSON: Yes. It was only a period of couple of years because my father resigned from the Los Angeles county committee in 1952. That is the year that I ran for assembly, much to his regret.

DOUGLASS: Oh, you did run. I didn't know that.

WATSON: Oh, yes.

DOUGLASS: In '52?

WATSON: In '52, against Laughlin [E.] Waters. He cross-filed and I didn't, and he beat me out on the primary. Of course, it was a Republican district.

DOUGLASS: We have to talk about that campaign.

WATSON: Well, there was no campaign as far as I was concerned, just a full education. As far as Susie was concerned, I liked her. My father had spoken very highly of her, as far as going back into the Voorhis era. My recollection of Susie on both the state committee and the CDC was Susie never came to a board meeting or an executive board meeting she didn't have the election code under one arm and Robert's Rules

of Order. She knew them frontwards to backwards.

In the women's division, which was an area I had worked in for years, the monthly meetings and the damned teacakes and the silliness, I liked her. I enjoyed her. I found her a very interesting person. She has five children. I don't know how many grandchildren now. She kind of had a child in between every campaign was the way they came along. She was an interesting individual. For my book, I enjoyed her.

DOUGLASS: Was she a pleasant person?

WATSON: Oh, yes. Men didn't like her because Susie was inclined to turn on the tears if she didn't get her way. I have always remembered John Gaffney's statement when you became totally feminine, why he would say, "Madale, your petticoat is showing." That would warn me. And my mother's attitude that you simply did not cry in the presence of other people, you did not resort to emotionalism. If you were going to run a fight, you ran it on regular rules that the men call. Therefore, you didn't do that. Susie could weep on the slightest provocation, if she wanted to get her way, which men disliked very much. They didn't care for that at all.

The other person who I have admiration for, who was really a cold, true politician, was

Eleanor Chambers, who was with [Congressman and Mayor Samuel A.] Sam Yorty. Eleanor gave total loyalty to whoever paid her. She didn't get bothered about the tenets of either Republican or Democratic parties

DOUGLASS: Oh, I see. It was not a party matter.

WATSON: No. She gave loyalty to whoever she worked for. If she was being employed by somebody, she gave them total loyalty. She was fascinating. She was an absolutely handsome woman, as a younger woman.

DOUGLASS: What was her position with Yorty?

WATSON: She was the deputy mayor. She had met up with my father in the thirties, when she was in charge of something or other on WPA for sewing projects. She was also a magnificent hat model. She had auburn hair and peaches-and-cream skin. Gorgeous brown eyes. And she could wear hats just beautifully. When I met her in the fifties in the Stevenson campaign, she told me about having coming out to Baldwin Park to talk to my father pertaining to the federal projects. In the days of trying to set up the gardens and the sewing projects and the rest of the stuff that went on in the thirties.

DOUGLASS: You were impressed with her.

WATSON: Yes. I was. She had, I guess, what is classified as rather that sixth instinct that people who are really good politicians have. As Mr. [Tom] Bane would say, "But my gut tells me thus and so." Not very ladylike remark, but it is expressive. If a woman says, "Intuition," I notice men just scoff. They use another set of words for exactly the same expression.

DOUGLASS: Right. Good point.

WATSON: It takes you a long time to learn that. You don't ever throw it at them, but you realize they do exactly the same thing.

DOUGLASS: Eleanor Chambers stayed with Sam Yorty for how long?

WATSON: She was with him, if I remember correctly, when he was a congressman. Then she came to him when he became mayor. And I tell you that Irishman was magnificent. I can remember sitting in my living room listening to him [on the television or radio] tell us about the separation of the garbage and the tin cans--the service he had been doing for the city in one of his reelection [campaigns]--and I thought honestly, "You doubletalker." He even had me convinced, walking across the living room in order to turn the darned thing off. He was the smoothest article with that nice, Irish smile.

DOUGLASS: And a word merchant?

WATSON: Oh, yes. Sure he was.

DOUGLASS: Well, he had his peaks and valleys.

WATSON: He sure did. An interesting character.

DOUGLASS: Now Mrs. Lybeck, who you said was deceased.
You obviously admired her.

WATSON: I did. I worked with here in school campaigns.

DOUGLASS: Now let me get this straight. Her husband was
James . . .

WATSON: James Roosevelt's field deputy in the beginning
of his [career], not all the way through,
because he died. Ed Lybeck. Ruth died of
cancer. Ruth died first. Ed died, I think, a
year later. I don't know where Dawn is, but
Sharon Lybeck works for the Irell and Mandella
law firm. They were delightful girls. I met
Ruth first in [Rosalind] Roz Weiner's [Wyman]
councilmanic campaign, in the very beginning.
There is another young woman, as far as I am
concerned, for all the ups and downs, she
fascinates me. I think Roz is a nice gal. I
like her. I know what the ups and downs are.
But I just happen to like Roz.

DOUGLASS: Right. So was Ruth Lybeck involved in that?

WATSON: She was involved in that original campaign of
Rosalind's. I met her in the '59 school board
campaign. I was involved in a number of school
board campaigns.

DOUGLASS: Really?

WATSON: Oh, yes. I didn't like what the school system was teaching.

DOUGLASS: Of course, these are nonpartisan. This is something else.

WATSON: Oh, yes. This is an entirely different field. But, I can tell you, this is how you begin to understand how the Republicans think. And their tactics. It is so hard to convince a Democrat, a zealot Democrat, that the loyal opposition has particular techniques in their thinking in some areas that turns out to be somewhat different than yours. You have to understand and give and take.

DOUGLASS: That is an interesting point.

WATSON: I was not going to work in a Republican campaign, but I certainly would like to see how the Republicans thought. You get in mayors' races, councilmen races, and school board races, and you work with both Democrats and Republicans for any given subject. And you find frequently that the approach is somewhat different. And so you learn something.

Just the same as you get over in the politicking thing, and you learn a lot of things from the men. But you go back in the dear PTA and you run the organization. And you can totally defy the Los Angeles Greater Council of

Camp Fire Girls. [Laughter] I got almost ostracized out of the darn thing, except that I made an impression. I was entirely too blunt for the career ladies. We used to call them the "Tenth District Beef Trust." [Laughter] We were the ladies who had gotten our children out of the grade school and out of the junior high and the high school and just could not give up running the PTA.

DOUGLASS: You called them the "Beef Trust"?

WATSON: That was what they were called. Somebody else told me about this, and I just howled.

DOUGLASS: Why is that?

WATSON: Two things. When you get to the mid-forties, your bra size is larger and the hips expand.

DOUGLASS: A physical description.

WATSON: Oh, yes. That was the reason.

DOUGLASS: That is funny. To go back to Ruth Lybeck. She was active beyond what her husband was doing, in other words.

WATSON: Only when she was asked to handle some campaigns. She handled some in the nonpartisan area. She apparently had been a former schoolteacher. She was soft-spoken. "Madale, you cannot insult volunteers by referring to that as idiot work." And I said, "Ruth, what in the hell do you call it?" She said, "You assign

them busywork." I looked at Ruth and said, "Oh, you are such a lady." [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: Well, did she do this as a volunteer?

WATSON: I am not totally sure. This is in the fifties. In the '59 [election], I think she was employed.

DOUGLASS: And this is which campaign?

WATSON: This was the school board.

DOUGLASS: That is how you first ran into her.

WATSON: I don't always remember how I met these people, when we go back to the fifties.

DOUGLASS: What is it about her that gained your respect?

WATSON: She didn't raise her voice. She didn't get excited. She didn't resort to a limited vocabulary with a fair amount of swearing, as I do. And she was reasonable and always allowing for the other individual's viewpoint. That is the main thing that I admired. She came at it, I felt, with a more tolerant attitude of human beings.

And when it came right down to talking about how you did things, I really felt that she understood the basic mechanics of politicking, as well as, if not even better, than her husband did. It is my feeling. She had great respect for her husband, and, I am sure, was very much in love with him. And, as a result, she felt that Ed Lybeck was an extremely qualified individual. She had great admiration for him.

I just thought that she was the better of the two. That is my personal opinion.

DOUGLASS: Thinking of Ruth Lybeck and Susie Clifton, these are people who would have been about your age at that time, or older?

WATSON: Well, Susie is a year older than I am. I think Ruth would have been around the same.

DOUGLASS: So you they came out of the same era.

WATSON: Yes.

DOUGLASS: That is very interesting. Then Carmen Warschaw.

WATSON: Carmen is a little younger. Carmen is about four or five years younger than I.

[End Tape 2, Side A]

[Begin Tape 2, Side B]

DOUGLASS: The women's division was in the fifties?

WATSON: Well, the women's division was there almost as a separate unit of the party clear to what was known as the Democratic reform, which came up in Kansas City in 1974. I think that is when we tried to remake the whole party nationwide.

DOUGLASS: This was not peculiar to California. This was nationally the way the Democratic party was organized?

WATSON: No. The women's division had always been, as far as we were concerned, in existence here. We didn't begin to change the structure. We changed the women's division to being just part of the party. Allegedly, the equality of men and women, equal and 50-50 and all of this nonsense. In the seventies--I can't remember if its '73-'75 or '75-'77, because there is a two-year period when I was not an officer of the party--I handled the legislative unit of the women's operation in '77-'79.

Between '75 and '80 is when we began true party reform. We got rid of the alleged women's division, and we said the Democratic party will have a chair and a vice chair. And they must be from the same section of the state, and they must be of opposite sex.

DOUGLASS: So a woman was bound to be either chair or vice

chair.

WATSON: That's correct.

DOUGLASS: And the two had to come from the same area so they could communicate.

WATSON: Apparently. Which, in my opinion, did not help us one bit. Because when you had the women's division, if you had the chair of the party south, the women's division chair was in the north. To this day, the state does not function as a whole state. It is just different north of the Tehachapis [Mountains] from the south. It is the same problem we have with the use of water. We don't have as much problem with commerce because one port is almost as good as another. Your other problem today is the fact that now San Diego is the second largest city of the state. So you deal differently.

DOUGLASS: I guess what I am hearing is that when there was a women's division, at least you were (either the north or the south) represented, as contrasted to the chairman of the state central committee.

WATSON: Up to this particular year. Now we are off on something that is entirely different and a total mess. For heaven's sake, this does not need to be quoted because this is just my opinion on the games we are playing now.

DOUGLASS: What is going on now?

WATSON: Well, what we are now doing, because we are allegedly autonomous, we are trying to make it a four-year term, instead of two. We are trying to put everything in one half of the state.

DOUGLASS: Now this is the state central committee?

WATSON: The state central committee. The state central committee went from this north-south division-- the chair was in one area and the women's division in the other--to a state chair and a state vice chair. Statewide. And then under that, a northern chair and a northern women's unit, and a southern chair. So that you had eight or ten officers of the party.

We now rechanged that so that this year we are only supposed to have five officers. We are in a rip-roaring hassle as to whether we are going to have four-year terms. When you are going to start them, whether you are going to let the chair run at-large, or whether it is only going to be run from the north half. It is a mess.

DOUGLASS: That could take forever to straighten out.

WATSON: It sure could because we may get some lawsuits on it before we are done.

DOUGLASS: All those variables.

WATSON: But the Democratic party has always been like that in this state. We have never run a

businesslike, in my opinion, organization as the Republicans do. On the other hand, if you take a look at a couple or three places, including two congressmen, two congressional districts or maybe three, and an assembly district, they've as great a donnybrook this time as the Democrats normally have. So I sit on the sideline and think, "Oh, goody."

DOUGLASS: This is built more into the woodwork for the Democratic party. Well, let's go back to Carmen Warschaw. You got to know her through the women's division?

WATSON: Yes. That is where I met her. Then I had my father's remarks about her. He knew her as a young Democrat, clear back in the thirties.

DOUGLASS: In the thirties. She was a young Democrat.

WATSON: Yes. She and Louis Warschaw. This was in their early marriage, as far as I know. My father always thought that Carmen was a good politician. An interesting gal, for a well-to-do woman.

DOUGLASS: Did they each have money?

WATSON: Well, Carmen's father was Leo [M.] Harvey, who made a fortune in the Harvey Aluminum [Inc.] as a result of World War II. Leo and Anna [Harvey] had three children. They had two sons, Lawrence and I forget the younger son's name, and Carmen

Harvey. And she married Louis Warschaw. The Warschaws were not monied people. But Carmen's father made a fortune in Harvey Aluminum down there in Torrance. As time went on, it was Lawrence, the older son, and the old man who ran the company.

DOUGLASS: So that enabled Louis Warschaw to embark on a successful career?

WATSON: Yes. He was involved in insurance. He made, apparently, a very good livelihood in that area. But Carmen, instinctively, as was her father, was good at the political world. Lawrence Harvey was really a very sharp businessman and ran things, and even in the party type of thing, as you expect corporate America would do.

My father used to remark that the old man and Carmen had a heart, and he was a little dubious about the older brother and the husband. As far as I am concerned, as I say, I have always had respect for Carmen. Like all of us, she made some blunders, but she was a sharp woman.

DOUGLASS: A pretty strong-minded person?

WATSON: Yes, she is. Economically, I am not in her environment. But I think the fact that I would stand up to her didn't put me in a position where I could ever be of the intimate group of people at all.

DOUGLASS: She was on the Unruh side of things?

WATSON: Sometimes. And I was always there. [Laughter]
Just sometimes.

DOUGLASS: There was a massive fight involving her and
the chairmanship of the state party?

WATSON: Well, yes, in terms of Don Bradley, who disliked
her, who was the campaign manager for senior
[Governor] Brown. When it came to the
chairmanship in '68, she lost that election to
[Charles] Charlie Warren by, I never know,
depending on who you are talking about, whether
it was two, four, or six votes. Unfortunately,
she just was terribly angry. She unfortunately
let fly publicly with statements that men never
forgive you for. Just never. So it was a
problem.

DOUGLASS: At that time, did it include you? Who were you
for?

WATSON: Well, this was the only time that I was dumped
on the state committee. In a two-year period,
two years and four months, I was not on the
state committee, since 1950. I had been--at
least I thought I was classified as--Charlie
Warren's campaign manager. I don't think that
Charlie ever thought that, but Jesse Unruh did.

But, one way or the other, in the '68
campaign [for state chairman], it has a very

interesting background. [Arthur] Art Wexler, who had been Jesse's fieldman in the assembly, went in as Charlie Warren's manager. In '62, was the reapportionment from the old '61 [districts]. I had worked on that reapportionment. And the district I was in had an incumbent Republican, and they only left him about seventy precincts of his original district. Charlie Warren became the nominee, filed and was running.

Art Wexler went in as the campaign manager. He had just gotten through law school and had passed his bar. And he had an offer in Washington, D.C., which was an excellent offer. He really could not turn it down. So he went to Washington. And that left a [Michael] Mike Coligcino, who had come out of USC [University of Southern California] in the war years with Jesse. Don't remember what Mike had been with, but, anyway, he came in at Art's request as the campaign manager. It was a very short time when he had an offer with [Assemblyman Thomas M.] Rees, who was running for senator, from the assembly level to the state senate. So he went with Tommy Rees. Here we had this campaign and no campaign manager.

I was moved in, and, on the other hand, I don't think Charlie ever felt that anybody other

WATSON: than himself masterminded the campaign. My viewpoint of it is decidedly different than his. I am aware that Jesse Unruh probably raised the most money for it. I am perfectly aware that I took any advice I could get from Jesse Unruh, John Gaffney, and Tom Bane, and I tried to follow anything that these three men suggested. Supposedly, I was handling this campaign, but I had my ups and downs with Charlie. This is '62.

Charlie decided to run for state chair in '68. I went to him, as I usually did, to ask for a reappointment to the state central committee. Charlie said to me, "Well, Madale, what will you do?" Carmen was running for it. And he was, too. And he said, "Well, Carmen is running for the office." I said, "Yes, I know." And we discussed this. I left with the feeling of understanding with Charlie as he said to me, "Well, Madale, I will call you and tell you." And I waited and waited, and Charlie never called me.

By the time I found out that he had made all of his state committee appointments, it was too late for me to go to either [Assemblyman] David [A.] Roberti or [Senator] George [E.] Danielson, where I might have been able to get an appointment. I realized that Charlie Warren

felt that if it was a case of voting for Charlie or Carmen, that I would vote for Carmen. And, to this day, I will probably never forgive him. I can get along with him, but I will probably never forgive him for not being astute enough to understand, if I had come and asked him for an appointment, and he gave me that appointment, that I was obligated to vote for him.

There is such a thing as your word being good. You are loyal, your word is good, and you have integrity. I have spent a lifetime working. I may be terribly blunt and with literally no tact in diplomacy, but, by damn, I have operated on a reputation of loyalty and a worker and integrity. And Charlie was so self-centered that he could not see that. I don't consider him a good politician. Therefore, for two years and four months, I was not on the state committee at all. From 1950 to this day, I went to literally all of their executive board meetings and took notes and got their materials and so forth.

DOUGLASS: You were not there to vote one way or another.

WATSON: No. So, at about one o'clock in the morning at the state convention, which I went to, I cornered him. And I proceeded to tell him exactly what I thought of him.

DOUGLASS: Was he surprised?

WATSON: I don't know. I didn't give him an opportunity to ever say a word. [Laughter] Fortunately, I had learned from Carmen's score, I did not say this in the presence of other people. I waited, and I hounded him from one meeting to another. I finally cornered him in his own headquarters, and I told him off. But I did not do so in the presence of other people.

DOUGLASS: And that is what Carmen Warschaw did?

WATSON: She did. And it made permanent enemies. You cannot humiliate a man in the presence of his peers and ever be forgiven. You simply cannot. And from the observation of others, I learned that along the way.

DOUGLASS: Carmen Warschaw thought she had the chairmanship, is that why she was so angry?

WATSON: She feels, in her mind, the governor had given her his word.

DOUGLASS: Governor Brown, Sr.

WATSON: Yes. And he welched. That is not surprising. I had learned my lesson in that clear back in the sixties. At the beginning. He dumped me off the nurses board because he was fighting Jesse Unruh. It didn't have a thing to do with the nurses.

DOUGLASS: Were you involved in some of Brown's early campaigns?

WATSON: No. In the '58 campaign, I worked the [U.S. Senator] Clair Engle campaign for United States senator, up on Western Avenue. Jesse worked the Brown campaign. Susie Clifton worked the Brown campaign. Eunice Chester worked there. I worked for Clair Engle, along with John Gaffney.

DOUGLASS: Did Brown appoint you to the state nursing board?

WATSON: Yes. In '61, that was the first time Alan Short had worked ten years to get a piece of legislation through which said that these various boards and commissions, and I think in that day there were twenty-eight of them, should have a public member on them, rather than the entire boards being within the profession or the industry or whatever it was. And the nurse's board only had five registered [members], it was the littlest board, the smallest board of the unit of all of these.

They went back to the legislature and asked that their board be enlarged to six members. They didn't want one of their nurses taken off. They wanted one person more because it was so small. And the other thing that was interesting, the nurse's profession had under their jurisdiction their curriculum, and it is not under the State Department of Education. And it has been a dogfight for years between

these two. They have jurisdiction over the criteria, or they did in that day. I am not sure twenty-five years later.

So they asked to have this enlarged, and it was. And those five nurses were hoping that they would get a woman attorney as the appointment, and they got a housewife that was a politician.

DOUGLASS: And how did you happen to get the appointment?

WATSON: I got it because Jesse Unruh asked the governor if he would appoint me there. I am not a nurse. I had two RN [Registered Nurse] sisters-in-law. I had been working for years as an American Red Cross nurse's aide. I had worked in hospitals. Back then I was still giving time to American Red Cross on blood banks. That kind of thing. I was interested. Jesse decided this would be a nice return for my having worked the reapportionment of '61.

DOUGLASS: What year did Brown appoint you?

WATSON: January of '61. It was the first appointment of a public member. I got about a one-line congratulatory letter from the California Nurses Association. Served my four years. In January of '65, the governor had told Jesse, "yes," he would reappoint me. Because the law read that you could be reappointed once. You could serve

eight years, and then you were finished. You could not serve any longer.

In March, [Assemblyman James C.] Jimmy Mills, in something he was in as an assemblyman, was in a dogfight with the Department of Finance. Hale Champion was the director of the Department of Finance. Dear Governor Brown got up one morning, angry as all get out, and he called a press conference and stated to the public that he was appointing actress Barbara Rush as the public member to the nurse's board.

DOUGLASS: Because Mills was indentified with Unruh?

WATSON: This was a whole ruckus in the finances and so forth. The fight with dear Jimmy Mills is mentioned in the book, The Disorderly House, that Jimmy has now written.

DOUGLASS: Yes. I read that.

WATSON: It is a good 95 percent truthful, too. That book is.

DOUGLASS: It sounds frank. It is interesting.

WATSON: The interesting thing was that when that was all over, the California Nurses Association wrote me a letter, a full page, in appreciation for my labors for the four years.

DOUGLASS: I suspect you really gave of yourself.

WATSON: I did exactly what I am doing now. If you assign me something, I am going to work at it.

DOUGLASS: Now, you said that Carmen Warschaw thought that Brown was going to deliver for her, and he didn't.

WATSON: I really can't give you a background. I would have to go back and look and reread to see what created this deal, but Brown backed off.

DOUGLASS: Left her twisting in the wind? At least she thought?

WATSON: Yes.

DOUGLASS: So she just vented in general when it backfired?

WATSON: She just blew up. And where she told these people off was in the presence of other people. Your peer level.

DOUGLASS: That's bad because there is no retracting that?

WATSON: You can't retract that kind of thing. I did that just once, and it took three or four years for [Assemblyman] Mervin [M.] Dymally to ever speak to me again. At about three o'clock one morning, in either Bakersfield or Fresno, I was so angry, and I just blew up. With several of Unruh's people telling me that I just could not do this. And I said, "I will do it." And I did.

DOUGLASS: It was three o'clock in the morning.

WATSON: But I was cold sober. Dymally was double-crossing Unruh at the time. I picked it up, and I just blew. As I say, it took me about four years, along with an apology on my part to

Dymally, to finally get back in somewhat the good graces of Dymally. And I had it coming to me because I should have never, I should have just never told anybody off. I was beside myself. I was so angry. You really can't afford to do that. You pay a very high price for that kind of thing.

DOUGLASS: Probably in any institution that is true.

WATSON: You need to go home and have a plot of ground half this size [referring to the floor] where you can take the spade and dig the living hell out of it when you are so furious.

DOUGLASS: It is equivalent to writing an angry letter and sitting on it for twenty-four hours?

WATSON: Yes. I did that once with Mr. Unruh. I wrote a letter when I was so angry. I got up the next morning and I read it again, and I mailed it. And a week later it came back to me. And the bottom of it said, "I really don't think that you really wanted to mail this." [Laughter] I may have that among my things, too, someplace. I am not quite sure if I kept that one or not.

DOUGLASS: That shows a very interesting perspective on his part that he would do that. Instead of being angry back.

WATSON: Oh, I am sure he was annoyed. But he sent it back to me with the statement: "I really don't think you wanted to mail this."

DOUGLASS: Well, if you have that one, that is a beauty.

WATSON: I don't really have any idea what has all been thrown into file boxes and drawers. I don't throw things out. That is the tragedy. I just don't throw them out. I must go through them.

[End Session 1]

[End Tape 2, Side B]

[Session 2, June 22, 1988]

[Begin Tape 3, Side A]

DOUGLASS: Mrs. Watson, when did you first meet Jesse Unruh?

WATSON: My recollection of Jesse Unruh was in 1952, when we both filed for assembly. He in the Sixty-fifth Assembly District [meeting], and I in the Fifty-seventh Assembly District. If you went from the Hollywood Hills southward, Fifty-seventh, Hollywood Hills on down, I think, almost to Slauson [Avenue]. And the Sixty-fifth further south in the city of Los Angeles.

DOUGLASS: Were they contiguous, the two districts?

WATSON: No. I think the Sixty-third had a leg in it somewhere between. In that day, we were all in the Fifteenth Congressional District, but there were four assembly districts in that one congressional district. But we both filed. His statement is that he knew of people who knew about me, knew who I was, in 1950. Because he was involved in the Sixteenth Congressional District, which is the Beverly Hills area, as it

is classified today. And he was very active in Esther Murray's filing. She was running for congress in that day. She did not make it.

In '50, he was involved with the census taking of '50. I don't know how much area of Los Angeles County he had, but he had a number of people under him. I have no recollection of him in '50, but he will remark about me in '50.

DOUGLASS: I did note that he became a member of the county Democratic central committee in '50. That I picked up in a dissertation.

WATSON: I would not have known that. The first time that he ran for assembly was clear out on the west side of town, along the coastline. It was what was known then as the Forty-eighth Assembly District. It was highly Republican. I thought he was still at USC going to school at that time.¹ As I understand it, he did that simply to get experience in the political atmosphere. He had been involved in the political activities at USC.

DOUGLASS: You also went on the [Democratic] state central

1. Unruh first ran and was defeated in the Sixtieth Assembly District Democratic primary in 1948, the year he graduated from the University of Southern California.

committee in 1950. He might have known of you from that.

WATSON: That is possible. I had been working. In '50, I lived exactly where I live today. In '48 and '50, I was in what was known as the Fifty-sixth [Assembly District], which was the Hollywood area. I had worked for a man by the name of James Harvey Brown--he was an attorney--both in 1948 and in 1950. I had worked very diligently in his campaign.

DOUGLASS: Was that as a volunteer?

WATSON: Just as a volunteer. As a result, he appointed me to the state central committee in 1950. That was my first time. That was the first time I was put on the state central committee, and it was by appointment. Then, in '52, after the reapportionment of 1951, living at the same address, I was in the Fifty-eighth Assembly District. It was predominantly Republican registration. And Laughlin Waters. In fact, I believe, there had been three Waters of that family that had been into the political environment in the Republican party.

I think it was two days before filing closed that the activists within the Democratic party realized that they had no one filed on the Democratic ticket yet. And I had been very active in the club movement at that particular

time and was on the state committee. And had several attorneys, and, I don't know, it seems to me there were real estate men and labor men, none of them wanted to give the time to running for office. So they came to me and asked me if I didn't think I ought to do this. Well, there was no chance of winning because you had cross-filing. And it was a Republican district. You would do this for what is known as "for the good of the Democratic party."

I can remember telephoning home to my father and talking about this. He said, "Now, Madale, you know you can't possibly win a thing like that. You just cannot do that." I said, "I understand that." Well, he said, "Do you also understand you become just like somebody in a fishbowl. And everybody thinks they are entitled to know all about you, including your personal life." I said, "Well, yes." I had been very active in parent-teacher work. And the American Red Cross. And the Camp Fire Girls. And I had been doing a lot of work in all three of those community organizations in an area where the majority of women I was working with were Republican, registered, in their political philosophies. I had already come up against the problem of not being in agreement of how you did things.

WATSON: I said, "Yes. I understand that." He said, "I just wish you wouldn't do it. You will get nothing but grief." And I said, "Well, if I understand that I am not going to win, what difference does it make?" He understood it was good for the party, but in the same breath, his parting remark to me was, "Well, I still wish you would not do it." And, in my typical fashion, I went right ahead and did it.

DOUGLASS: But he duly warned you.

WATSON: That's correct.

DOUGLASS: What was the campaign like? You had to file, by what, March?

WATSON: The filing terms were, I believe, the same kind of ruling they have now. You have to file on a given date. You have to get so many signatures. It seems to me it was no more than thirty. I can't even remember what you had to pay for that, but it was a very nominal sum. I had almost like a business card made up. In fact, I have two or three of those still around someplace. I didn't do anything other than that. There was a built-in club movement in the area, a beginning. And there was the beginning concern for the need for doing something to try to thwart the loss of your party concept with the cross-filing situation.

The other thing that happened in '52, of course, was the presidential Stevenson campaign. You appealed to a tremendous number of upper-middle class, is what I think you would call them, as far as people were concerned, that had a higher educational level and a higher income than, at least, what is by and large considered the rank and file of the Democratic party. So the enthusiasm within human beings within the party was high as a result of the Adlai Stevenson [campaign]. The west side of the county, the Beverly Hills area, and the north part of the San Francisco area, he had appealed to just literally hundreds of people who had not been activists up to that time.

I do remember, in August of '50, I went to the state convention. In that day, they all met on the same weekend in Sacramento. The Republican party had the use of the senate chambers, and the Democratic party had the use of the assembly chambers. I don't have any idea. There was the Communist party. I was going to say IPP. It was the one that Henry Wallace created.

DOUGLASS: Independent [Progressive Party]?

WATSON: Maybe it was IPP. I guess it was. It seems to me that there were five or six bona fide registered parties that came within whatever the

rulings of the election code in existence at that time.

DOUGLASS: And they all met in Sacramento?

WATSON: They all met on the same weekend. In the middle of August, I think.

DOUGLASS: Blistering hot.

WATSON: I only remember, as a native of Los Angeles County, that was the first time I had ever been to the state capital.

DOUGLASS: Oh, really.

WATSON: And the state park. And I was duly impressed.

DOUGLASS: That must have been wonderful.

WATSON: It is an interesting thing. I don't have any great recollection of Jesse Unruh, particularly, at that particular moment. The party interest as a result of the 1952 campaign was that--and the loss of Stevenson--you had to develop something within the state of California to figure out how to circumvent the problem of the cross-filing.

My understanding of the creation of that, between 1910 and 1912, was the problem of the fact that the railroads--the [Collis P.] Huntingtons and the [Leland] Stanfords, whoever the four were, people that now have done enough philanthropic things for their heritage that we respect them--in that day simply controlled the political environment of the state of

California. And Hiram [W.] Johnson, at least, was one of the people who didn't care for this. This was when cross-filing went into existence, in order to try to break the hold of the railroad companies on the political environment of the state of California.

DOUGLASS: Could I go back just a minute to this campaign with Laughlin Waters to finish up? Was there any other Republican running besides Waters? Was it just you and Waters? You were the only Democrat?

WATSON: I was the only Democract, and he cross-filed.

DOUGLASS: Was there any other Republican?

WATSON: I don't have any recollection of that.

DOUGLASS: Well, do you remember being with him? Were the two of you asked to speak together for the primary?

WATSON: No. Nothing like that at all. As I look back now, I realize I was not a true campaign speaking circuit as we know today.

DOUGLASS: But I am sure what you were doing was according to the style of the time.

WATSON: Of what was done in that day. Which was into wherever you could find the activists, the Democrat activists.

DOUGLASS: Well, because of the nature of the district, did you make any attempt at that point to woo the Republicans?

- WATSON: None whatsoever. Because I understood thoroughly there was no possibility of my winning that. And I would have to go back and look, but it seems to me that I ended up with around 5,000 votes. Mr. Waters took the primary. He got more than that. He got considerably more than that, on the Democratic side and also the Republican one. I am trying to think, it seems to me I didn't spend more than \$250 or \$270.10 or something of the sort. [Laughter] It was just absolutely simply [nothing] compared to what is done thirty-five years later.
- DOUGLASS: The reason why I asked you the question about the Republicans is you were active in the voluntary groups such as Camp Fire Girls, and I was thinking that some of those Republican women might have known and respected you.
- WATSON: I don't think that was true at all.
- DOUGLASS: You mean that they would not have voted for you?
- WATSON: Yes. Besides being active in Van Ness Avenue PTA, I had been their ways and means chairman for different years, which was absolutely unheard of. Any ways and means chairman, by and large, does the physical work for raising money. If they did this one year, that was it. I had taken three years. I became the PTA president for a term.

I also, either simultaneously with that or within a year, was the chairman of the Hollywood-Wilshire district Camp Fire Girls. The Camp Fire organization was in nineteen elementary schools in that area. Because I was an activist within the political environment and didn't keep my mouth shut when I probably should have, there was a group, particularly in the Los Feliz, and, it seems to me, in that day, the Micheltorena [School] areas [I antagonized].

DOUGLASS: Where is that?

WATSON: Micheltorena Elementary School is up off of Sunset [Boulevard]. In that area. I had been looking at the upper divisions of PTA, because you moved out of your elementary councils into what was known then as the tenth district, which was Los Angeles proper at that time. It is now divided into, I think, two or three units at that level. The women carried on then at this other level when their kids were to the place where they were in junior high and then got to high school. And that is where I think I remarked the last time we spoke where I referred to the women on this board of the tenth district council as the "Beef Trust." These were women in their mid-forties, who were beginning to put the weight on, and this was an acronym that was used at that time.

DOUGLASS: Were you interested in going through the chairs and up into . . .

WATSON: Yes. I was interested in going on with that. I was a member of the junior high PTA for a year. My children were five years apart, so, I had a wide spread. I think I gave, actually, thirteen years to parent-teacher work. I had taken a legislative chairmanship out of either the Van Ness or LeConte areas, I don't remember which it was. Because I was fairly vocal in my belief, I antagonized a number of the ladies from these other schools.

The other thing that I was interested in, by becoming chairman of the Hollywood-Wilshire Camp Fire Council for these nineteen schools, I was also giving consideration of going into the greater Los Angeles Camp Fire unit. I was interested in possibly being on that board. That was the area I was truly interested in. Then, all of a sudden, I was made aware by people, who, at least, looked kindly upon me, that I was being accused of being a fellow traveler.

DOUGLASS: Now was this the late forties, early fifties?

WATSON: This was the early fifties. This is between '51 and '54. And you had the First Congregational Church on Sixth [Street] and Commonwealth

[Avenue], or whatever it is. Better known in that day as Dr. [William] Fifield's church. With the liberty bells. And you had the America First. You had a real problem within the school system. Because it was at this time, that I discovered the book on physiology at Fairfax High School, in the index of the book there was a chapter on heredity, and the chapter did not exist in the book.

DOUGLASS: Oh, really.

WATSON: Yes. There were problems of this sort to the extent that I can remember being with a group of people, a group of women, who simply went down to the superintendent of schools' office in our indignation at the attitude that if you didn't believe in democracy in the terms of these particular groups of people who were wrapping themselves in the American flag, then, of course, you were not loyal to the country. Here I am, a native of this county, who had been raised all my life to give time to your fellow man, had done quantities of volunteer work in any number of areas. Then, of all a sudden, I am being accused of being a fellow traveler.

Well, besides being indignant, there were two things that came out of it that were of great value. I had a friend out of the Los Feliz area, a working acquaintance within the

organization. I didn't know what her political affiliation was. It turned out that she was a registered Republican. But she was on the Camp Fire board. One day, she just simply stood up and said, "Now, look. I find this very unfair, and, I think, probably very untrue. I have known Madale Watson for a number of years, and I don't believe you could find any kind of evidence that this woman would be classified as a fellow traveler. You may disagree with her entirely, but, as far as her loyalties and being a good citizen, it is there. And I don't think this is a proper thing to be doing."

The other thing that it did for me was, from that day forward, I was very careful never to accuse somebody of being a Communist unless I actually could prove that that individual was a card-carrying Commie. The word was just bandied around. If you didn't like somebody, or you disagreed with them, then this was the type of thing you did, in terms of name calling. For me, it caused me to be very careful in the future as to who I was accusing of being disloyal.

DOUGLASS: A bitter lesson.

WATSON: Yes. It was.

DOUGLASS: Did this really blunt your future in the PTA?

WATSON: Yes. I came to the realization that there was no way I would carry on in that and simply removed myself.

DOUGLASS: You had gotten to the district level of the PHA?

WATSON: No. I was a member, but I never went any further than just within the Hollywood-Walshire council. The Van Ness Avenue area.

DOUGLASS: How about the Camp Fire Girls?

WATSON: The Camp Fire Girls, I realized that the same thing would have been true, depending upon who the leaders were. We had an executive director who was a delightful woman, a single woman who also began to set down some rules and regulations that I didn't particularly care for. I came from a school that had three groups of Camp Fire girls out of that group. The leaders of these groups were congenial, and we didn't let our political affiliations interfere with our interests in terms of girls. We were within the same neighborhood.

So I took the Camp Fire manual and read it thoroughly from cover to cover. I realized if you were following the manual, it was not necessary for you to follow some of the edicts or rules that were coming from the Los Angeles headquarters. Fortunately, there were two or three other women who didn't let that bother them either. We kind of blindly went along

doing things in our district the way we wanted to do them. But we were reminded periodically that there was protocol to follow and so forth. So with that, I took myself downtown one day to see Miss [] Courts to discuss some of this. I asked her point blank because I had the Camp Fire manual down pat to know exactly what we were allowed to do.

DOUGLASS: Now, who was she?

WATSON: Miss Courts was the executive director of the Greater Los Angeles Camp Fire Girls Council at that time. I don't know that I paid much attention to the board. I had kept track of board members, who they were in the city. But, it was like many other things. You found the civic-minded people, and, by and large, they were predominantly, in their political affiliations, Republican in political background.

But, with Miss Courts, I covered this and asked her point blank if I was not within the rules of the organization. She had to acknowledge they we were. I said, "Well, I am perfectly aware that there are women who do not wish me to be moving any further up the line in terms of the board. But I will tell you what, Miss Courts, there is one thing that you will

not have any control over. I took this group of fourteen girls at age seven, Bluebirds. We had them once a week during their Bluebird time and the first year they were Camp Fire girls. Then we had them once every two weeks. As they got into Horizon Club for high school girls, we had them once a month." This had to be in the middle-fifties that this happened.

My remark was if I had worked with these girls for that length of time, chances are ten-to-one that I made some contribution to their development. And it really didn't make much difference whether I was ever on a greater Los Angeles council board or not. That particular influence on fourteen girls would be something that she could not do one thing about. And for my book, that was all. There was satisfaction in that. Therefore, I would be perfectly satisfied with that as a reward for the labors that I had performed. And I just let it go.

DOUGLASS: What did she say?

WATSON: The Hollywood unit, as long as Mrs. Watson was the chairman--I think I was chairman of that for two years and they were several other women in our area who were chairman--we, more or less in the Hollywood-Wilshire area, did as we saw fit. We had Third Street, Wonderman, Santa Monica, Vine, Los Feliz, Micheltorena [Schools]. It had

everything from the Catholic unit down there on Norton [Avenue], almost to Olympic [Boulevard].

We had a woman there who was old enough to be the grandmother of girls in Camp Fire, and she kept a unit going for fifteen to twenty years, of little girls who came from a home environment that didn't allow for mothers having any time whatsoever. A remarkable woman, who had just given years of time and experience and love to children in an area where there were not parents who had the time or the monetary background or anything else who could do that. So as a result, it was just a case of knowing you had a good job done, and nobody could take that away from you.

DOUGLASS: Was that your "last hurrah" for the Camp Fire Girls?

WATSON: Yes. When that group turned seventeen. I had that group eleven years. Other than this other woman, I think, my term was as long as anybody's. She had been absolutely phenomenal. I had great admiration for that woman. She was a true Christian woman who had really given tremendous time to the community, plus to her church.

DOUGLASS: Why had you done all this? You are drawn to volunteerism, but that is a lot of years to

devote to PTA and the Camp Fire girls. What caused you to do that?

WATSON: I suppose, the reason you do that was that you had a lot of energy. I never could sit still long enough to learn to play bridge. I was not inclined to be involved in church.

DOUGLASS: Did you belong to a church?

WATSON: No. I never have. I have never belonged to a church. And, yet, the activities that I had been into in my growing-up days had been with a community Methodist church. Into the social area. I suspect it was the social contact because my husband was three years in World War II. When he came home, he was home one year, and then he developed this sports camera. From there on out, he traveled with the American Bowling Congress. He was gone. I imagine, really, it was more of a social outlet. A contact with people.

The girls fascinated me. I had a bad time with them when they were little, but I had a coworker who just loved small children. Irene [], when they were seven, eight, nine, ten, did beautifully with them, as far as putting up with their silliness. By the time they were junior high level, they were beyond her, as far as knowing how to cope with them, and they began to fascinate me at that stage of the game. That

and through high school, they were fascinating. Because they were just as smart as I was, except that I had thirty or thirty-five years experience more than they did. So that always saved you from getting cornered totally with them.

DOUGLASS: Well, do you think the frustrating experience you had going up through the hierarchy caused you to swing towards the political volunteerism more? In terms of how you expended your energies?

WATSON: I think there is a possibility of that. Because I realized in the fifties, I took this one fling, a kind of circus thing, as far as running for political office. I am aware today that I was not anywhere near as secure as I am today. I was an extrovert. As a result of that, you could never convince anybody that you had a colossal inferiority complex. And I did.

My real problem, as I look back, I am very well aware that I was trying to prove that I was equally as good as the next person. I had spent most of my life trying to do things, from my viewpoint, that would convince my mother that I was well qualified. I was really clear to fifty before I ever understood and could accept that she really didn't expect as much as I thought she did.



DOUGLASS: You laid that on yourself.

WATSON: I apparently had laid that on myself, really.

DOUGLASS: That is pretty common.

WATSON: And apparently it is. I find that this thing repeated itself with my own children. My parents were activists, I realized. You didn't label it in that day. But you recognize today that that is what it is. Between that and the fact that I just never believed that I was as smart as my husband. By the time we had been married fifty years, I came to the conclusion, "yes," in my area. I am not that smart in electronics, but I am much smarter than he is, from my viewpoint, today in a number of other things, which there is no use in talking about because he would not believe that on a bet. [Laughter] And the political area, you have interesting people.

There was another activity I was in. I gave twenty-one or twenty-five years to American Red Cross.

DOUGLASS: Oh, yes. You mentioned that.

WATSON: But, that, too, was a feeling that you were not doing your share.

DOUGLASS: That started in the war.

WATSON: Yes.

DOUGLASS: And did you go up?

WATSON: No. I just carried on, on that.

DOUGLASS: Were you on the local Red Cross board?

WATSON: No. In '42, my brother was in the army. My sister enlisted in the United States Coast Guard. And my husband was absolutely determined to be in that war. He was at an age level, had two children, and he was in the motion picture industry. He had no more need of going to war than he had of flying. He was determined to be in that war. He ended up being a chief petty officer in photography in the United States Coast Guard. So my family were all in service but me. I was just, again, that driving feeling that you had to equal other people.

In '43, this sister-in-law who lived with me was a professional woman, and she was recruited, I think it was the second class Good Samaritan [Hospital] put forth, appealing to professional women to become nurse aids. She enrolled at Good Samaritan on that. And because she lived with me, and there was conversation, I went with her. I entered that--this is '42--because I entered that in the summer of '42 with her. You did ninety hours or something of book work. And it was done in kind of a genteel level. You were dealing with a caliber of woman that was above the average. And my husband enlisted in October, and somehow, with the red

tape of the dear government, we never got a paycheck for six months.

DOUGLASS: Oh, yes. You mentioned that.

WATSON: Christmas came and I went to work. So I just dropped out of it.

DOUGLASS: Out of the Red Cross?

WATSON: Out of the Red Cross. So, in the summer of '43, I was home. I had worked six months for May Company and decided this was just more than I could handle with two children. I quit and came home and went back, checked back on the American Red Cross, and I finished the other ninety or ninety-five hours of that, but I did the physical work, the routine work at [Los Angeles County] General Hospital. I got a much better nursing background than my sister-in-law did. Because I was put in with the nitty-gritty at General Hospital.

DOUGLASS: You saw everything.

WATSON: I sure did. As a result of this, the two of us then gave our volunteer time, two nights a week, six to ten o'clock. I think I was maybe a month at Good Samaritan but predominantly at Hollywood Presbyterian [Hospital] and Cedars of Lebanon [Hospital]. It was up on Fountain [Avenue] in that day. The other two sisters-in-law were registered nurses. You had a contact, or some rapport, or understanding of the nursing

profession. So you have those two women, one working at Lockheed [Aircraft Co.], and one working on a swing shift in the delivery room at Hollywood Presbyterian [Hospital]. And then the two of us on the outside doing nurse aid work on a volunteer basis two nights a week. Well, I did that for the duration of the war and carried on, I would say, '45, '46.

And then, instead of doing that I began to donate blood because there was tremendous blood recruitment drives in that day. I went to work as a nurse aid for American Red Cross on mobile units. By the time I got to the fifties, there was this friend who was in the political world, a man--I think he was a graduate out of Pomona [College]--who was a class A hemophiliac. And they used him to go out and recruit blood donors. Because at that time, you had to donate blood in order to have a centrifuge for plasma. And those victims were all having to use straight pure plasma or whole blood for bleeding. I continued from '42. I must have worked for American Red Cross for twenty-one, twenty-two years. It was on blood mobile units doing hemoglobin and that type of thing. And, also, periodically, doing a recruiting deal in order to get people to donate blood for this friend of mine.

DOUGLASS: That is a lot of years. Well, let's go back to when you met first Jesse Unruh. Your memory is that it was in the '52 assembly campaign. What is your recollection of that meeting?

WATSON: I have no recollection when I first met him at all. I simply don't have any recollection of that.

DOUGLASS: You just know you did.

WATSON: Yes. The district--it is not exactly the same--in that day, you had your political organizations geared to the congressional districts. And you had what was known, in this case, I think it was the Fifteenth Congressional District. And the representatives of the county committee of the assembly districts and the state committee of the assembly districts and the club chairs came into the district. I think, in '50, there were four assembly districts. So when you had a monthly Fifty-eighth Congressional District [meeting], you could have anything from forty-five to fifty people, on up, depending upon what you were arguing about, to 150. You had to get a small hall of some sort to have your meetings.

The only thing that I really remember out of that was the fact that we'd get into discussions about subject matter. Let's see, he

ran in '52 and lost the same way I did. In the [Sixty-fifth Assembly District] primary. [John W.] Johnny Evans simply took it on the primary. Then he went back and ran in '54 and won it. And, in that time, I really don't have much recollection about him, other than recognizing that we would argue a subject matter within a meeting from opposite ends. And this happened over and over again. And, yet, when a vote came, we voted exactly alike. But arriving at it was not done easily.

DOUGLASS: Can you give an example of that?

WATSON: No. I don't even remember what the subject was. But, I remember one night, and we had a vote. Whoever was against it didn't like it. They asked for a show of hands, an account. And they didn't like it. And they demanded a roll-call vote. The secretary was not at that particular meeting. I was the treasurer of that organization. It seems like I was invariably elected treasurer to things right down through the years.

DOUGLASS: Yes. I have noticed that.

WATSON: All I could ever figure was that I was willing to do the extra work that was necessary to get these things taken care of. Anyway, we had a roll-call vote that particular night on my memory of who had paid dues.

DOUGLASS: Oh, my word!

WATSON: I did not have a record in front of me. I did not have it. The secretary was not there. The membership list was not there. We did a roll call on my memory of who were paid members. And whatever the subject matter was won by not more than six . . .

[End Tape 3, Side A]

[Begin Tape 3, Side B]

DOUGLASS: Well, how did Unruh vote?

WATSON: We were on the same side. As far as I can remember. I don't even remember what the subject was. I just remembered, at the time, I thought, "Boy, I hope I can get this accomplished." And the fact that I was not challenged. As time went along, and the other things you get into, and the ups and downs, I look back and I think, whether people like me or not, they believe that I was honest. They absolutely had to believe that I was honest.

The other thing that goes along with this, of course, is the fact that the California Democratic Council [CDC] was created in this same time. That was another interesting thing as far as the southern half of the state was concerned. Because in that club movement there were only three congressional districts here in Los Angeles County that had as their CDC director, elected by that unit of people, and their cochair of their congressional district at the state central committee level, being the same people. The Twenty-fifth Congressional District, which was this [San Gabriel] valley, had a John Gaffney out of Baldwin Park, and he was both the director and cochair. And Susie Clifton out of the Nineteenth, which was

Holifield's area, was also the same thing. I held both positions for several years out of this Fifteenth, which was the center part of the city type of thing.

DOUGLASS: So that meant you three people each were on the state . . .

WATSON: We were the cochairs of our congressional districts on the state central committee, but we were also the director of our district on the CDC. Now, in the north, there was a great deal of that because there was compatibility with the club movement. The club movement had greater weight with that state committee in the north half of the state than it did down here. There was also very shortly after the creation of the club movement, the organization called Dime a Day for Democracy, which was done in the fifties under Elizabeth Snyder and [Clinton] Clint McKinnon from San Diego.

DOUGLASS: So this all spun off the Stevenson loss?

WATSON: Oh, yes. Because this came up, in my opinion, for two reasons. You had people with interests and time, money, and desire to try to do something. From my viewpoint, in the northern half of the state, George Miller, Jr., the state senator, I feel, really understood that the power of the state, populationwise, of course,

was coming to the south half of the state. And, if you didn't figure out some way to get an activist type of thing operating, you would have the power of the party in the south half. And San Francisco had been the power base from the turn of the century, for heaven's sake. A good fifty years. And they didn't wish, really, to give it up.

So you created an area that would allow for activity, for people to do things who wanted to do something, but you also geared it so that it [the north] would still have control. Because you only had eight county committees here for the south half of the state, and you had fifty of them north of the Tehachapis. And, at that time, every county chair also had an independent vote on the state committee.

DOUGLASS: You mean every county chair?

WATSON: Every county chair. But you had fifty of them north, and you only had eight of them south.

DOUGLASS: Let's get into this CDC thing. Miller called this meeting in January of '53 in Asilomar. Did you go to that meeting?

WATSON: The original meeting, I did not go to.

DOUGLASS: Apparently, that was an all-inclusive group of people.

WATSON: Yes. It was. You see, out of that today, it is kind of like thinking that Richard Milhous Nixon

started his career in 1950 against Helen Gahagan Douglas. Well, that is not true. He began in 1946. Today, Paul Ziffren and Alan [L.] Cranston, you would think, were the original fathers of CDC. As far as I know, from the things I remember, George Miller, Jr. was the gentleman who understood what these problems really were.

DOUGLASS: Well, he called that first meeting. And, that, I gather, was, again, "let's get together and decide what we do, because we didn't get Stevenson elected" and everybody was fired up about it. Did you feel that way at the time?

WATSON: I don't think that until I got into those meetings I realized there was this north-south power play. I didn't understand that until I truly was sitting on the state committee executive board, on the one hand, and sitting at the CDC. Here were three of us down here who got both sides of the fence all of the time.

DOUGLASS: That's amazing. Let me go through this thing again. Did you go to the November 1953 meeting when they decided to go ahead?

WATSON: I think I must have.

DOUGLASS: As I understand it, spinning off of that first meeting, that January meeting, there was to be a meeting held north and a meeting held south.

And the meeting north was apparently held. Was it Clinton McKinnon in the south?

WATSON: Clint McKinnon.

DOUGLASS: He was hesitant to call the one for the south. And that was part of the confusion with Dime a Day for Democracy. More things were going on down here?

WATSON: Yes.

DOUGLASS: And, finally, Miller insisted that he hold a meeting. Now, did you happen to go to that meeting?

WATSON: I think I went to those. I simply don't have a memory of the kinds of things that went on, other than knowing that I was into these kinds of things.

DOUGLASS: You were learning a lot?

WATSON: That's right. And the other thing that I was doing, I was very active in the women's division. And that was a case of the tea cakes and the coffee that you had to put together for ladies once a month. One thing led to another. No, I guess it was into the sixties that I got to the place where I was coordinating dinners. Although I did something in '58. Because the other thing that happened to me was in '59, where I just got told one night to go into somebody else's office and pick up all the materials because it was to be brought up to the

headquarters, and we were going to run that dinner there because it was not being handled properly in the first place. And that was in '59.

DOUGLASS: Do you know what dinner meeting that was?

WATSON: It was a state party dinner. That goes beyond where we are talking now because former Judge [William H.] Rosenthal was the state chair. And the headquarters was on Third [Avenue] and Vermont.

DOUGLASS: But that was the first time you did the whole thing?

WATSON: I was assigned to doing what is known as, what I call, the "idiot work" of these things.

DOUGLASS: Well, I want to get into the whole dinner topic later. Let's go back to this other [topic]. What did you think of this Dime a Day for Democracy movement?

WATSON: I saw nothing wrong with it. I understood, really, the reason for it, because, again, there was this power play of the party and how it would be conducted and [that] who would represent should literally come out of the north half of the state. At least from my viewpoint, you didn't appear to have very dynamic people in the southern half of the state.

And the northerners, the San Francisco area and Marin [County], the environment of that--San

Jose and on up to Marin County--really, from my viewpoint, seemed to consider the south half of the state just exactly the way the easterners consider all of the state of California. We were somewhat uncouth, not very well developed, not very well educated. We didn't have any of the niceties. We didn't understand about culture and this kind of thing. And that was true into the middle of this twentieth century as far as this state is concerned.

DOUGLASS: Well, did you, for instance, join Dime a Day for Democracy?

WATSON: I think I did.

DOUGLASS: It was thirty-six dollars a year.

WATSON: Oh, yes. I know it was that.

DOUGLASS: Did you know Elizabeth Snyder?

WATSON: Of course. When the chairmanship of the party rotated back and forth, the southern chair would be the titular head on the one two-year period. And, then the next two-year period, it would go north, and the northern chair would be the titular head of the party. And, yet, they were never classified truly as the chair of the whole state.

DOUGLASS: Right.

WATSON: Because you had both the chair and then you had the woman's division chair. Interestingly

enough, in the overall picture, it seemed to me that you produced more outstanding women in terms of what was good for the party as a whole in development of activists from women when it was in the north half of the state. And Elizabeth was the first woman to have that southern chair title that, up to that time, had always been held by a man. So at that time, she was the southern chair. Then you had a woman's division chair. Then you had a--I am trying to think whether it was her year or whether it was four years later when it was Carmen's--but you had all three. The chair, the women's chair, and the southern vice chair were all women. They were all women.

DOUGLASS: But, at the time, when she was so involved with Dime a Day for Democracy, you knew her then?

WATSON: Oh, yes.

DOUGLASS: What did you think of Elizabeth Snyder?

WATSON: Oh, I thought she was marvelous. A hard worker. Intelligent. In a world where she was literally like a lone individual in a man's world, trying to hold her own. She had some of the best brains in town out trying to figure out how to absolutely circumvent her and outmanuever her.

I can remember sitting in a meeting one night--I was so indignant--where I was almost beside myself. The men in that meeting,

including Paul Ziffren, tried by innuendo to imply that there was something really unhealthy about the people she had confidence in and was dealing with in the alcohol field. And the innuendo was, that having been a rip-roaring, former alcoholic, that she was not truly able to handle this particular position. I can remember a whole row of women so angry that we could have almost lynched a couple of men that night. I know now that they played the game as business plays it. I did not understand that in that day at all.

DOUGLASS: That was the way you did it?

WATSON: That is exactly right.

DOUGLASS: To get at her?

WATSON: So what you had happen was that, in that same era, you had the state committee that met as a whole committee once in two years. Then you had the executive board that met four times a year to conduct the business of the party. Then you created, at that time--and that was in Elizabeth's regime--they got through in one of the executive board meetings a steering committee of nineteen people.

And what really happened was that you would have an executive board meeting for either Friday night and Saturday or all day Saturday

and half of Sunday, and you would adjourn that. Then you would have this nineteen-member steering committee go into session and simply vote out everything you had done, or thought you had gotten accomplished, in the executive board meeting.

DOUGLASS: How strange.

WATSON: Oh, no. That is how you controlled things.

DOUGLASS: By letting the steering committee control it. Now, when you talk about the executive committee, you are talking about the state central committee, right, which you were on?

WATSON: Right.

DOUGLASS: Who were the components of the executive committee?

WATSON: The executive board meeting was comprised of the cochairs of each congressional district. You must remember, in that day, I don't think we had more than, maybe, thirty congressional districts.

DOUGLASS: So that put you in there?

WATSON: And the officers. Well, the YDs, the Young Democrats. I am not sure whether the CDC had a representative in the very beginning on this board, or not. And, I do not know what the percentage of the county committee chairs were which were on to it. This is just off the top of my head. If you had about 800 on the state

committee as a whole, you would not have more than maybe 150 that made up this executive board. Then, in that time, in the fifties, you had this nineteen-member steering committee.

DOUGLASS: Now how were they appointed?

WATSON: I can't remember. I have a feeling that I have that somewhere. I have close to ten years of records in the fifties and sixties of both the state committee and the CDC somewhere in that garage. Because Faith Windsor used part of that for her dissertation years ago. I have to have that stuff stashed away someplace.

DOUGLASS: Well, that's power. What you are saying was that the steering committee really had veto power?

WATSON: That is exactly what I am saying.

DOUGLASS: Wherever the source of their appointment, it was where the power was.

WATSON: Now that got changed. The rules in the state committee change just as often as every two-year period. We had no permanency on the thing.

DOUGLASS: This was the alternate year, wasn't it? That this meeting was being held? Or were these quarterly meetings every year?

WATSON: There were four quarterly meetings for each. In other words, you would have eight executive board meetings in a two-year period. Because

there were two things as far as I was concerned I just felt that I have given a lifetime trying to change. Both things have now come to pass. A year ago we abolished the steering committee. It had become useless. It is off the books. I must have spent fifteen years trying to work on that one. Anyway, I have been on [the case of] that steering committee literally from 1952 to now.

And the other one was--I thought it was just outrageous--that you only had one full meeting of the state committee as a whole, which was just once every twenty-four months. In that area, I thought that the CDC was correct. They ran a yearly meeting in terms of their elections, but they ran on the alternate years on what they called an "issues convention." We call it a convention today. All that I asked was that we ought to have one full yearly meeting. And, eventually, we got that on the books somewhere in the last fifteen to twenty years.

DOUGLASS: Persistence pays off.

WATSON: If you just stick at it forever.

DOUGLASS: Can you think of the people who were on the steering committee? Would they have been elected officials?

WATSON: They were, basically, the power people in the

raising of money and so forth for the party.

DOUGLASS: Well, to pick up again on what was going on down here. You had Dime a Day for Democracy. I have read one claim that Elizabeth Snyder and that group may have wanted to seize control of the Democratic party meeting, gaining control as the most vital organization. But, I guess, they just really got aced out by CDC. Does that make sense to you?

WATSON: It surely does.

DOUGLASS: Did they have a chance, do you think?

WATSON: No, I don't think they ever did. Because the south never did understand, from my viewpoint, that the club movement, or the club activity, really was more predominant within the northern half of the state, other than a short, less-than-a-ten-year period in the county of Los Angeles. And it was totally under the jurisdiction of the county proper in this county. But none of the other counties in the southern half of the state had anything to compare to it at all.

DOUGLASS: So all the action was in Los Angeles County.

WATSON: The other thing that happened was that by law, election code, it is the county committee that has chartered the club movement of the state. And, in the beginning, they created this Democratic council club, and it was an

extracurricular organization. It was not chartered by either the national committee, the state committee, or the county committee. Finally, the CDC said that their clubs must affiliate. They must charter with county committees. So that made them absolutely legal, but that was not true in the beginning.

DOUGLASS: These are the CDC clubs?

WATSON: Yes.

DOUGLASS: The other clubs were chartered by the county.

WATSON: The county committee's responsibility is the development of the party.

DOUGLASS: There are two parallel things going on.

WATSON: Oh, yes.

DOUGLASS: It is very confusing.

WATSON: Totally. Only California and Texas would be this foolish. They have sets of rules that nobody else understands. That is the only thing I know about Texas. And nobody has ever understood California. The thing that was true of this was supposedly you had county-chartered clubs. And the reason they appeared to be official was the fact that the county committee people must run on the ballot, be voted upon by the citizenry, the same as candidates who become nominees and then become incumbents. They are voted in by the average citizenry.

So it is a person of the population

directly voted in that has the power to charter the clubs. And there are rules and regulations. You must have eleven of the twenty who are going to sponsor a club live in the assembly level proper. This kind of thing.

DOUGLASS: So you don't have floating members.

WATSON: That's right. But, in the period of 1953 to 1960 with the idea that, among other things, there was the buildup of [the movement for] getting rid of cross-filing, you have the development of this club movement. I don't know whether there are true facts on it, but I believe the peak of that club movement was such that you had around 60,000 to 65,000 people who would be classified as Democratic political activists who were interested in this situation.

DOUGLASS: This would have been in the mid-fifties?

WATSON: This would be the late fifties. And this is what assisted in getting Governor Brown [Sr.] elected in 1958.

DOUGLASS: The great '58 sweep.

WATSON: That's correct. The purpose of the club movement, so we said, was to abolish and get rid of cross-filing.

DOUGLASS: That was one thing everybody agreed on in the beginning?

WATSON: You must get rid of cross-filing. All right.

Governor Brown was elected. The first thing that came on the ballot was that in filing for office, what you had to do was to state your party affiliation. So the first time this came out, you could have a name on your Democratic ballot, but you would know whether it was a registered Republican or a registered Democrat. And, then, by the time you got to--I don't know if it was the legislature of '59 or the one of '61--you finally got that totally off.

DOUGLASS: It was passed in '59.

WATSON: But it was legislation that did it.

DOUGLASS: It may not have affected elections until 1960.

WATSON: Until 1960. That may have been true. But the point was, the creation of the club movement, you were told originally, the purpose of it was to get back to a direct primary, to get rid of cross-filing.

I can remember one night standing in a meeting and saying to [Lieutenant Governor] Glen [M.] Anderson, "All right. What is the purpose of the club movement?" The California Democratic Council of Clubs. If you have gotten rid of the preprimary endorsement, then how dare you--if you are going to keep a direct primary--decide to do preprimary endorsements. It is not logical. It has been a discussion I have proposed to people from that day to this. And

because it thwarts whatever they want to do, they pay no attention to it. Now, if your really wanted preprimary endorsements, then you should have gotten rid of the direct primary.

DOUGLASS: So you mean there should be caucuses or something like that.

WATSON: I don't know what you have, but you get rid of the direct primary. The purpose of a direct primary is to have Democrats or Republicans, anybody who is a bona fide party member, file, tell you why he or she is good, and, you, as a citizenry, make up your mind as to which one of these people you think is the better. But that is not the way it works. And that is not what they want to do. They don't want to bother to spend another fifty years to get rid of a direct primary. And most of them don't remember that there were people who gave forty years of their political activity to get rid of cross-filing.

DOUGLASS: Did you go to that November 1953 Asilomar meeting where CDC actually was founded?

WATSON: I have been two or three times to Asilomar. I thought I did. I am on their original articles of incorporation because I was elected the director of the Fifteenth Congressional District. And I am told that on the original articles of incorporation of the CDC, my name is there.

DOUGLASS: This is when Cranston would have been elected president and it took off.

Well, let's talk a little bit about the people who very active down here. You have talked about Miller. Richard Richards was a very active young Democrat.

WATSON: He was the county chair at that time, I think.

DOUGLASS: Did you work much with him, Richard Richards, during that period? Or later?

WATSON: I was automatically on the county committee from '52 to '54 because I was the nominee. And I don't have any recollection of how many times I have been elected to the county committee, and how many times I have been appointed to the county committee. I have been going to county committee meetings since the year one, it seems sometimes.

I am trying to think whether it was under Richards' time of chair, I think it was, that the county committee of Los Angeles County was probably the most outstanding. It is the only time the county committee truly was a viable, excellent organization. I may not have agreed with it a third of the time, but that is beside the point. It had executive officers, and it had five field deputies that it employed for a period of either two or four years in order to

go out and do club development within this county.

It also operated for the development of the Dollars for Democrats, the October yearly drive, for really going out and doing precinct work, going door-to-door for solicitation of funds. And it was a viable, working committee. It even had money enough either--I am trying to think of when slate mailers came in--to help on that or to make contributions to campaigns. It has never been that strong, as far as I know, before, and it certainly has never been that strong since.

DOUGLASS: That was in the fifties, right?

WATSON: Right.

DOUGLASS: You then were on the board of CDC.

WATSON: That's right. Ten years.

DOUGLASS: Cranston was the first president. What were those first board meetings like? I don't know how often that board met.

WATSON: It seems to me that it also operated on the same situation of quarterly meetings.

DOUGLASS: Would they go north and south, is that it?

WATSON: It made a greater effort to meet in the middle of the state, either in Fresno or Bakersfield. Fresno got to be the deal where you could drive from both San Francisco and Los Angeles in about an equal amount of time. And you would end up

in the hassles at three o'clock in the morning for pancakes and eggs at Hart's [Restaurant], an all-night deal. That kind of thing.

DOUGLASS: What was Cranston like at that time?

WATSON: In the very beginning, my recollection was that he handled it very well. There was fair unity. There was fair reason for the activities of what was going. There was the feeling that the legislators didn't listen to the people, the activists. But there was also the problem in that day of whether you were going to listen to this grass-roots activist, or was organized labor going to control you? It was fascinating to listen to people who [talked as though] organized labor was the enemy, rather than in reality being on your side and the Republicans were supposed to be your enemy.

The difference of opinion with Jesse Unruh really came as the result of the second term of Edmund Brown, Sr. Because there is more than one person who truly believes that Edmund Brown, Sr. did make a gentleman's agreement with him that he was not going to make an effort to run for a third term. And the individual that should have been the leader and should have been carrying the banner would have been the speaker of the assembly, one Jesse Unruh. Those things

didn't come to pass. From my viewpoint, Mr. Brown's ego got in the way. And the other problem that got in the way was your own core of people that keep you on top of the heap. And their desires and their needs are the things that usually undo the top man.

DOUGLASS: Brown had a challenge or a problem, didn't he? He needed Unruh's support, at least, in the first four years to carry the programs through.

WATSON: He got it.

DOUGLASS: Yet CDC was kind of identified as a Brown organization. Well, why don't we talk about that. First of all, in '59, the legislature abolished cross-filing, which we just discussed. Then you had the '62 election.

WATSON: There was a time in the summer of '62, all of your polls told you that sheer apathy was going to allow Richard Nixon to be the next governor of the state of California.

DOUGLASS: Just apathy?

WATSON: Plain apathy is what was going to happen. From my viewpoint, there were a couple things that did happen. The thing that created the need for doing the Get-Out-The-Vote in Los Angeles County was the surveys or the checks that had been made throughout the state where you believed that the people were not going to go to the polls, and if they didn't, Richard Nixon was

going to win.

DOUGLASS: Wasn't there also at stake this whole business of reapportioned districts because you had the 1961 reapportionment? Some people were running in new districts, either congressional or assembly. There was a lot at stake in this election beyond the governorship.

WATSON: Yes. But, fundamentally, this need to Get-Out-The-Vote, which was geared for five thousand precincts in the county of Los Angeles, was because, originally, the boys who were doing the survey and the checking and so forth believed that apathy was going to be Pat's downfall.

DOUGLASS: Now, where were you putting your energies in that election? In '62.

WATSON: I got tossed over into the Fifty-eighth Assembly District. And I had tossed in my lap, right in the middle of things, the Charlie Warren assembly race.

DOUGLASS: Oh, yes. You talked about that.

WATSON: That is the one. It had been Art Wexler's and then Mike Coligcino and then eventually it was mine.

DOUGLASS: You related that story. Well, Unruh was out working for Brown, right?

WATSON: Yes. It was Unruh's man who did the mechanics. James Roosevelt's name went to that thing, but

it was one Larry Margolis that did the mechanics of it, assembling it and putting it together.

DOUGLASS: The campaign.

WATSON: The Get-Out-The-Vote operation.

DOUGLASS: This is the famous story of when Unruh was doing this. He hired people--ten dollars a person--to get the vote out.

WATSON: It was the closest you would come to slave labor you would ever come across because you were asked to come in somewhere in the week before for an orientation class, in the evening or afternoon. So you had to give an hour or two hours of your time then.

DOUGLASS: You did this, I gather?

WATSON: Of course. Of course you did. Then you had to be in by one or two o'clock [P.M.] on election day, and the polls closed at seven o'clock in the evening. You were expected to give that amount of time.

DOUGLASS: What is it that you had to do on election day?

WATSON: Well, you had to show up at headquarters and pick up the materials for the precinct you were walking and checking.

DOUGLASS: To make sure they voted. All right.

WATSON: Yes. And you were expected to do this like from two to seven o'clock. That's five hours, isn't it?

DOUGLASS: Yes.

WATSON: OK. Let me tell you that having gone to orientation class somewhere before that day on this thing, giving that afternoon and evening, and then making a report back in after seven o'clock as to who had at least voted, you were not desperately overpaid. Let me tell you, you weren't.

DOUGLASS: They gave you an orientation. Then you showed up by one o'clock because by then they figured they had an idea of how many had voted so far. Then you were given names, and you were to go out in the precinct and get these ten people?

WATSON: That's right. That had not voted.

DOUGLASS: How many people would it have been that you were expected to contact? I thought I remembered ten.

WATSON: That was set up to deal with either three or four people to each precinct.

DOUGLASS: That's a lot.

WATSON: Of course it was. This involved thousands.

DOUGLASS: So you went and rang doorbells?

WATSON: Yes. You checked your precinct. You were supposed to do your precinct like Willard Murray and I did in San Francisco one year on a special election, where you covered everybody who had not voted and you covered those households three different times before the polls closed.

DOUGLASS: So if the lady of the house happened to be home, because most men would be working at two or three in the afternoon, would it be a satisfaction of your duties if you got her to say, "Oh, yes, we are going to the polls at five." Or something like that.

WATSON: That was not satisfactory. No. You were supposed by five o'clock to check, and if those people had not voted, you were supposed to go back and definitely urge them that this was their patriotic [duty].

DOUGLASS: Well, how many people would one individual be expected to cover?

WATSON: You did them in pairs. You had a precinct sheet. A printout. You checked those who had voted. If there were seven houses on this particular block that had not voted, you rang the doorbells of those seven. And if you came back later and discovered that there were five who had not voted two hours later, you were supposed to go back and check them. And at 6:30 [P.M.], you were to recheck. To my knowledge, out of all the precinct walking on registration or to Get-Out-The-Vote I have been in over the years, this was probably the most thoroughly done one that was ever done before or since.

DOUGLASS: Sounds like a killer.

WATSON: That's right.

DOUGLASS: You worked with COPE [Committee on Political Education] on this thing.

WATSON: That's right. It is the political branch, or arm, of organized labor.

DOUGLASS: I read that 13,000 people were involved in this.

WATSON: There was a fantastic amount of people. My recollection was that we were involved with 5,000 precincts.

DOUGLASS: Yes. Four thousand precincts. Maybe that is just L. A. County.

WATSON: Well, this was only done in Los Angeles County.
[Interruption]

DOUGLASS: Do you think that turned the election? At least, it certainly did a lot in L. A. County.

WATSON: It had a definite effect in L. A. County. What is debatable is. . . . Of course, the people involved with it believed that is exactly what did it. By the same breath, you had the Bay of Pigs failed invasion of Cuba, and the attitude of the public and its problems of whether we were going to be invaded, this type of thing, became another interest. But this didn't come until what? I thought it was the first week in October.

DOUGLASS: Yes. It was late. People got diverted in their attention.

WATSON: Well, it came home to roost that you had some

problems. Who did you have for your governmental representative? So there was more interest in this particular election, where your surveys before had indicated that there was no interest whatsoever.

DOUGLASS: Let me just finish up this ten-dollars-a-person project to get the vote out. Apparently, the money for this came from. . . . Let's see, I have \$150,000, plus two-thirds from Pat Brown, Stanley Mosk, and the state central committee. Then COPE paid \$3,500 to the recruits, which was quite a lot. Do you remember anything of how that was packaged? The financing for the Get-Out-The-Vote project.

WATSON: I think that is fairly accurate on that. The problem was that you went to pick it up, and, of course, after this was all over, you got told the story of Unruh and Marvin Holen--I think, at that time Marvin was an intern--that you had these bagmen out picking up money. We have lived to see the day when this is accepted practice. By the time the boys who did not want Mr. Unruh to be even considered for running for governor in '66, the stories that went out were absolutely fascinating as to who was picking up money and that kind of thing.

DOUGLASS: So a lot of charges came up because it was a paid effort and not a volunteer effort?

WATSON: That's right. But the indignation on people's part who were Unruhites was that it was still a volunteer organization. If you went out and got a babysitter to stay with your children while you wanted to go do this for a period of five hours in a day, you explain to me where in the world you were making any profit off of it. You were not. You simply were not. This was probably the most massive volunteer effort that ever had been done in this state.

DOUGLASS: It was a first. It was above board?

WATSON: This is correct. Now, there have been special elections where you had begun to perfect this kind of thing. One of my amazing recollections is in December of 1959, a special election out in San Fernando Valley when Tom Carrell won the assembly district. I will never forget that little operation because I went out there with Jesse, and we walked precincts. I mean, Jesse walked blocks just the same as I did. We rang doorbells.

[End Tape 3, Side B]

[Begin Tape 4, Side A]

WATSON: Mr. Unruh took the young housewives to the polls. And Mrs. Watson stayed at the house and took care maybe of a small baby or to see that the potatoes on the stove did not boil over.

DOUGLASS: That seems very effective.

WATSON: It was. It was priceless.

DOUGLASS: What a great combination. When was this?

WATSON: I think it was December of 1959. It was a special election to elect Tom Carrell. We covered that precinct two or three times to get every voter that we could to the polls. It always tickled me because Jesse handled the pretty girls, and I did the home work.

DOUGLASS: But that is a great combination in any case, giving them a ride, plus a sitter. And you look trustworthy.

WATSON: That is exactly right. By five minutes of seven [in the evening], we met two delightful, middle-aged ladies, somewhat buxom, in business suits with a little gardenia in their lapels on one of the corners of one of the blocks of this precinct. And they were perfectly delightful ladies. They came from San Marino. And they were walking the same precinct to get the vote out. They were the Republican ladies from San Marino into that area. It was areas where the lots were a hundred feet wide. They were like

commercial half-acres and this kind of thing.

DOUGLASS: Were there sidewalks?

WATSON: Some of them had sidewalks; some of them did not. Polls closed at seven o'clock. But I can remember, standing on this corner, chitchatting, Jesse and I, with these two women. We discovered that they were from San Marino, and they were doing exactly what we were doing. The assemblyman from the Sixty-fifth Assembly District and Mrs. Watson for the Democrats. We exchanged niceties and what we felt was the result of how we had gotten people out.

DOUGLASS: [Laughter] Very civilized.

WATSON: Very civilized.

DOUGLASS: Who was Tom Carrell running against in that special election?

WATSON: I don't even remember.

DOUGLASS: Was it because someone had resigned or died?¹

WATSON: Yes. It was open. If I remember correctly, it was in the first week of December in '59.

DOUGLASS: It is hard to get people to remember to vote in a special election.

WATSON: That's right. That was a situation where you have to go back and look at who the county committee people were at that time. There,

1. Allen Miller resigned. December 8, 1959 election.

again, this was an operation done with the state central committee and the county within the county, making an effort to get a drive out there. And, at that time, Mr. Unruh was the Ways and Means [Committee] chairman in the assembly.

DOUGLASS: Probably this was because he had supported Ralph M. Brown for assembly speaker?

WATSON: Yes, but that did not come until '61.

DOUGLASS: I meant I understood that Mr. Unruh was made chairman of the Ways and Means Committee because he was a great supporter of Ralph M. Brown when he gained the speakership.

Talking about the '62 election again, that was a pretty dirty election, wasn't it? Wasn't there a lot of mud being slung around? Nixon and Brown.

WATSON: I realize that I am biased. I don't think Richard Nixon ever operated anything where there was not a great deal of controversy.

DOUGLASS: Wasn't there a redbaiting kind of thing?

WATSON: Yes. I think it arrived again. The redbaiting was the key of Mr. Nixon's popularity, or his rise.

DOUGLASS: And I believe he took off after CDC as being left wing.

WATSON: To me, that is not unreasonable because you are supposed to be regimented, and we are supposed

to do things that, basically, the Republican party wants you to conform to and do things in proper order. My attitude is that when you get a bunch of Democrats together, good lord, you are never expected to ever have anything orderly. Everybody wants to express themselves and does. From my viewpoint, there is nothing wrong with that. In the eyes of some of our society, disorderliness is not proper.

DOUGLASS: It is considered irresponsible by some people.

WATSON: That is what happens.

DOUGLASS: I suppose, in that situation, you get a vast spectrum of views.

WATSON: You certainly do. Sometimes, you get some very brilliant ones, which turn out to be very good.

DOUGLASS: Again, you get the anti-Vietnam War [people] and you get a lot of people . . .

WATSON: You get all sorts of things out of it. But, if you don't ever open your mouth, how do you ever hear any new ideas? So, I see nothing wrong with that. I came of a family, that if you wanted to shout, you could. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: Were you then still on the CDC board in '62?

WATSON: Yes.

DOUGLASS: You were on it the whole time.

WATSON: No. I am trying to think when Clair Engle wanted to run for reelection, when he had the brain tumor.

DOUGLASS: That was '64, I believe. Yes. It was the '64 election that Engle was ill, and he wanted CDC's endorsement. And Brown supported Cranston.

WATSON: Stanley Mosk was supposed to have been running on that one and backed off at the very last minute. Is that in Long Beach?

DOUGLASS: I am not sure about that, but then Pierre Salinger jumped into that race.

WATSON: That would have been '64. That is the last voting CDC convention I went to.

DOUGLASS: Were you there when this whole thing about who to endorse came up? You must have been.

WATSON: Yes. I was. That was in Long Beach. We thought we had Stanley Mosk clear up to mid-day Saturday.

DOUGLASS: To run for the senate?

WATSON: That's right. And you heard Clair Engle speak over some type of telephonic thing from Washington, which was a tragedy.

DOUGLASS: I guess, he was obviously ill. Then he asked for an endorsement. Now, wasn't Cranston in this, too?

WATSON: Yes, he was. I was an appointment of Charlie Warren's at that time, if I remember correctly.

DOUGLASS: That is the state central committee?

WATSON: No. The CDC convention. No. That is wrong. I wasn't his appointment. I think I was as far as

the state committee goes. I was there just as the CDC director of the district. But, one way or the other, Charlie was for Alan Cranston.

DOUGLASS: Charlie Warren.

WATSON: Charlie Warren. And he asked me to vote for Cranston. And he gave me a lot of argument, and at the stage of the game where I think I knew that Mosk had backed off.

DOUGLASS: And he was the favorite?

WATSON: As far as I was concerned, I was for Mosk. The story was one that the Brown people had put forth. There was an alleged photograph of Mr. Mosk and a lady that apparently he had traveled with to quite a number of places. You were led to believe that this was a photograph that was such that it would be detrimental. In reality, it turned out, I was told later, that it was merely a photograph of Stanley Mosk and this woman getting off of a plane. Good lord, you could have been doing this under any set of circumstances. But, Edna [Mosk], apparently, was simply beside herself.

DOUGLASS: Was that his wife?

WATSON: Yes. They had a son who, I think, at that time, was, I thought, at college age. I am not quite sure. Anyway, as far as I know, from the things I have been told and heard and so forth, the problem was Mrs. Mosk's anxiety and problems.

Stanley at the very last minute on Saturday backed off. I remember going down the aisle, and I voted for Cranston and walked back to where our district sat. And I said to Charlie Warren, "I have voted for what you wanted. And this is the last thing I am doing with CDC. I am finished!" And I never went near CDC from that day forward until somewhere into the early part of the eighties, and then I went as the observer to one of their conventions here, in this decade.

DOUGLASS: Hadn't CDC basically changed by '68?

WATSON: No. They didn't at all. And they claim ten or twelve thousand membership today. I think they probably have legitimately about five or six.

DOUGLASS: They are there in a different form. That is what I am getting at. Unruh supported Engle up until the last? Wasn't he behind Engle?

WATSON: I think, in this whole back-room operation, I thought he was with Stanley Mosk until he backed off. He was really no friend of Cranston's. I basically was aware of that. In the first place, he is the gentleman who finally realized that Mr. Cranston, as controller, had the only patronage system in the state of California. With the appraisers. And he was as coldblooded about it as can be. Which I did not know about

in that day, but, since I work for one [an appraiser], and have for twelve, fourteen years, I have met two or three other people. Now, we talk about the good old days. Cranston had a very interesting situation.

[Interruption]

DOUGLASS: There was antipathy between Unruh and Cranston. Was this about when it began?

WATSON: I don't really know when that started. I know as an assemblyman, he became aware--I guess, it turns out to be with the budget report and yearly reports on departments and so forth--of how lucrative this inheritance referee's position could be. Some of these people were making an amazing amount of money.

DOUGLASS: As a referee.

WATSON: As a referee.

DOUGLASS: So, it was a real plum to get the appointment.

WATSON: Yes. It was. And the other thing, as far as I can tell from conversations, that was true was that here was Mr. Cranston being lauded a great liberal and for the little man. In reality, if you checked Mr. Cranston's votes on the various commissions he was sitting on as the controller, his votes did not tie in with the kind of speeches he made.

It was kind of similar to always being told that Earl Warren was such an open-minded,

moderate, liberal governor. In reality, as my father said to me, "Madale, if you check out Earl Warren's votes, you would understand that he votes a straight Republican approach to things. And a liberal Democrat does not see that as being the best way to go about certain situations." This has always been true of Alan. He is pronounced really liberal, and he is probably as great a pragmatist as we have met in a long time.

DOUGLASS: And always was?

WATSON: Apparently, really was from the very beginning. As a result, there was a definite difference of opinion. And I am perfectly aware that many a time where Edmund Brown believed that he was the savior for a misunderstood group here and a misunderstood group there--and this is the same kind of a thing Alan gets credit for--Jesse really felt that he was the man who believed in the subject matter, the principle. He was the man who did the work to get it enacted into law. And he chafed quite frequently under the idea that these other people, who didn't really believe in those things in the first place, in the last analysis, were getting full credit for them.

DOUGLASS: And didn't do the work?

WATSON: They didn't do the work for it. Beside the fact they didn't do the work for it, in reality, I think, he really believed that they didn't wholeheartedly believe in it, and so ended up getting full credit for something that they were more or less forced to come along with.

DOUGLASS: In other words, lip service. Do you think this was there when Cranston was president of CDC? Do you think there were differences, or did they emerge a little later?

WATSON: Well, it seems to me, the problem with Jesse came up. . . .

DOUGLASS: I am speaking of Cranston.

WATSON: I am trying to think, the problems of these things came into the sixties, rather than in the fifties, if I remember correctly. There was not a tremendous problem within the fifties. The problems came up after he became speaker in '61, and they continued to grow clear until he was moved out in '66.

DOUGLASS: Yes. I wanted to go through that, particularly in terms of CDC. That period. In '61, of course, Unruh became the speaker. I gather the big antagonism came to a peak beginning in July of '62, when a slate of candidates, headed by Tom Bane, defeated the CDC slate for the L. A.

County central committee. Which, of course, controlled the chartering of the clubs.

WATSON: That's right.

DOUGLASS: Now, what is your version of that? Do you remember that?

WATSON: I guess I do because I think I was part of it.
[Laughter]

DOUGLASS: It seems to me that you were part of everything.

WATSON: It seems to me that I spent an awful lot of nights running mimeograph machines or that type of thing because you did an awful lot of this by hand in that day. I am trying to think if that is when we ended up getting all of the segments of the party under one roof on Sunset Boulevard, everything from the national committee to the YDs [Young Democrats], including the Democratic Associates, which was a monied unit. And the CDC. Everybody was under the same roof. I guess, this was the time. The first slate mailer that was put out, I believe, was in that '62 [election] because that was right after the reapportionment.

DOUGLASS: July of '62. I guess, this was viewed as a throwing down of the gauntlet by CDC--I am just reading between the lines--but I gather their concern was that if their candidates, their slate lost, then you would have a county committee which would probably not tend to want

to charter these more liberal clubs. At least, that power of chartering of clubs was an implicit threat. And not endorsing CDC-favored candidates.

WATSON: Well, the problem came up with the fact that CDC was not confined to any set of rules or regulations that were within the law. And everything else was. I believe the problem was the fact that state committee people said, "If you are going to be a club, you need to be chartered. And to be chartered, you must be chartered by the county central committee." And there was a segment of the CDC that wanted no part of being told that they had to do anything for anybody.

My understanding since that time is the national committee charters clubs, and so the state committee should. We just never did it. I don't know yet why we don't. We are into that same discussion right now as to whether the state committee should do chartering. My real feeling is that it never gets very far because it is a pain in the neck, and nobody wants to put forth the time and effort on it.

DOUGLASS: It seems to me this might be a real problem in large states. I could see in a small state where a state committee could do it. But just isn't the mechanics of accomplishing that in a

state ~~as~~ big as New York, say, or California hard to do?

WATSON: It may very well be.

DOUGLASS: By a state committee, in other words.

WATSON: The problem is: Do you have competent staff? Did you ever raise money and decide that it ought to go for the operation of the organization? And if you did, then do you purchase competent help, and do you get it done? There is no evidence that we have ever done that at any time. Yet, the Republican party, so I am informed, runs those state parties like a business. At least in the thirty years that I know about the state committee, very rarely is it run like an honest-to-goodness business.

DOUGLASS: You feel that you have not had the staff to do the job?

WATSON: That's correct. Most of the time we didn't. And what times you had a fairly adequate staff and was competent, you had used other things to be your priorities. You stated other items as having much higher priorities.

DOUGLASS: That's sort of a chicken-and-egg thing, isn't it? Because you don't have the money, and you need to raise money. But do you want to take money for staff?

WATSON: But, in this same time, in this same era, the state did raise enough money to give all

nominees some money. Because it was like in the \$250, and the \$500 and \$1,000 bracket, there was a couple of those people that just sent it back with utter indignation. This was trivial and insulting. Never taking into consideration that this was exceptional for the state committee, as against the past records of the state committee. In going back, I think that is probably in fair proportion as to who raised funds on this.

I don't know whether if I told you this last time. This is where I got into trouble with Margolis over this Warren race, when I didn't check with the man who was the supervisor--he just never got back to me--and I felt time was running out. I had either forty-one or forty-two block precincts, and I needed work done in them. I just arbitrarily went ahead and ordered and sent in and did what I needed to do to do it. I didn't follow protocol, and I got a rip-roaring dressing-down. And the gentleman took about three years to get around to even bothering to speak to me.

DOUGLASS: This was the Charlie Warren race. Margolis said you had not done it by the book?

WATSON: That's correct. And that if everybody did this, he could not keep control of things. Which, of course, was factual.

DOUGLASS: Now, Margolis was in what capacity at that time?

WATSON: Margolis was the administrative aide to Speaker Unruh in Sacramento. He was brought down here to do this. In the same breath, in Congressman Roosevelt's office, there was one gentleman from out that way by the name of [] Manny Rohatner who was involved in this. [Anthony] Tony Rios was the man out of the barrio for the Mexican-American units. I am trying to think who was the black who was involved. This is the beginning. . . . In that election, Mervyn Dymally became an assemblyman.

DOUGLASS: Which year are we on?

WATSON: Sixty-two. But this was the creation, really, of the rise or the beginning of black community activity, other than the fact that you had [Assemblyman] Augustus [F.] Hawkins down here who had been there forever. He practically looks white. And [Assemblyman William] Byron Rumford in the north half of the state, and these were the only two blacks that you had. There were no other blacks involved, in terms of the political environment. Basically, Jesse Unruh started half a dozen or more of these who today are actually the foundation of the black political community of the state of California.

DOUGLASS: Why did he feel strongly about that? Why did that get his attention out of all the many

things where he could put the resources at his command?

WATSON: I don't know that I know why this group of young people appealed to him. They were young. They were drivers. It must have had something to do with labor, because I can remember being sent into one of these things, down in his area, standing on an orange crate and telling a group of workers what they could do and what they could not do. And where they could go. And I was talking to Negroes and Mexicans, and, in my typical fashion, I was just as blunt as could be, and I got off of this orange crate.

I told Jesse where I had been, and he said, "You can't talk to those people like that. You just can't be that blunt." I just looked at him and said, "Tough. I have. It has already been done."

DOUGLASS: [Laughter] What did he say to that?

WATSON: Well, I guess, it was like many of them. "God deliver you from Madale." That is all I could figure. I just bluntly informed them that they could not go into white communities. They could not do this, because all it would do was to undo what we were trying to accomplish.

DOUGLASS: You laid it on the line?

WATSON: I just laid it, absolutely, one syllable, on the line.

DOUGLASS: He was concerned that they would be affronted.

WATSON: I suppose. I had a couple of labor men tell me that "You don't talk to the labor movement like that." I said, "Tough. I have already talked that way." They have not ousted me yet.

But the other thing was that I was literally just in an ordinary house dress like this and tennis shoes. And I worked. I did physical work. I never asked a man to do anything that I would not do. They, apparently, were not accustomed to having "ladies" that appeared to be just a worker. In that day, you were dealing--in the fifties anyway--with CIO [Congress of Industrial Organizations] and AFL [American Federation of Labor], labor. And you ethnic groups were predominantly into CIO.

DOUGLASS: The industrial area.

WATSON: And I was just as blunt as I usually am.

DOUGLASS: What I am really trying to get at with my question is did Unruh have a deep concern for the minorities--the blacks, the Mexican-Americans--aside from the fact that these were up-and-coming, bright, young people?

WATSON: Yes. I think Unruh sincerely believed that you needed to face the inequities of your society. The thing, in my opinion, that was fascinating about the man was the fact that he also had prejudices about him, too. But, I guess, we all

do. In reality, I think we all do. This was also true of the Jewish community.

DOUGLASS: He had the mixture.

WATSON: Yes. He did. There is no doubt. Because too many times there were the snide, caustic remarks. By the same token, it is just like everything else. The tragedy of it is, it comes back to the individual human being. There are the decent, good, respectable, admirable human beings in every color and every creed. And there is also the miserable hypocrites right across the board.

DOUGLASS: The stereotypes [in their minds].

WATSON: I think he truly recognized that there was desperate inequality.

DOUGLASS: Do you suppose some of that came from his boyhood experience with them?

WATSON: I don't really know. In that respect, the only thing I got about his childhood was the abhorrence of poverty. Just that there was not a great deal of discussion in terms of ethnic groups. It was just poor, white poverty that was discussed.

DOUGLASS: The grinding poverty. I suppose an extension of that might have been that some of these minorities experienced more poverty than others.

WATSON: I don't know a great deal about his growing up in Texas, other than poverty. And occasional

just outright brutality.

DOUGLASS: Did that affect his attitude towards possessions? Personal wealth and possessions. In other words, some people overreact, who have been brought up in that kind of poverty, and really like to throw the money around, or want money, or they react in various ways. Did you see any of that on his part?

WATSON: [Laughter] The fascinating thing about Jesse Unruh, to me, was the amount of times you went with him to K-Mart [Discount Stores], May Company basements.

DOUGLASS: The bargain hunter.

WATSON: Oh, yes. Just absolute bargains. Always for the sale. This kind of thing. Never, never acknowledging, really, that if you had sixty-two pairs of shoes, that getting a pair of Bally's for a hundred and a quarter that he would always tell you were \$200 shoes was truly extravagant. There was no economy. There was no thrift in the fact that you had a pair of Bally shoes at a hundred and a quarter when you had no more need of them than flying.

DOUGLASS: But he thought that he had gotten a bargain because he got them for less?

WATSON: Of course. I can remember when he became speaker and [Manning J.] Manny Post had such a fit about his attire. He had a tailor in that

end of town, who was very, very reasonable. You bought very ordinary fabric, and you had suits made that were a good bargain, a good buy. Very ordinary. Manny used to have a fit about this. I can really remember the first and second pieces of yardage that came. Beautiful pieces of wool. I can't tell you where they came from. I don't remember that. A tailor out in Beverly Hills was to make it by hand. I would be willing to gamble that that suit is still in his closet.

DOUGLASS: You mean he never wore it?

WATSON: Oh, he wore it. It is still there. It is still hanging because he literally never gave up anything.

DOUGLASS: In other words, he used it and used it.

WATSON: He did not wear out things. He was not terribly hard on clothing.

DOUGLASS: Did he have a lot of clothes? Did he have lots of suits?

WATSON: He had three sets of attire. He had a complete set of clothing for when he weighed 190 to 225 [pounds]. He had a whole other set of attire for 225 to 260. And he had another set of clothing from 260 to 305. There were three full sets of clothing.

DOUGLASS: But once he started to lose weight, he didn't go back up to that, did he?

WATSON: He never went back up to that.

DOUGLASS: He kept it to remind himself?

WATSON: He just never got rid of it.

DOUGLASS: He never gave them to the Goodwill [Industries]?

WATSON: He gave to my husband, we have probably seventy-five ties. When the ties were the narrow ties, and ties became fashionable which were very, very wide, my husband would not wear them. And getting narrow ties became difficult to find. And, good heavens, all of a sudden one day, I had two full tieholders that were full of everything, lord, from like three-dollar-and-ninety-five-cent to forty-dollar ties from all over. And they are at my house today. These were given to Richard probably six, seven years ago.

DOUGLASS: It sounds like in his clothing closet he would have everything from very cheap to very expensive. But he liked clothes, did he?

WATSON: Must have. And the sports things. I tell you, I suppose I have shortened the pant legs of pants over the years, probably three dozen in the sports things. Not tailored.

DOUGLASS: Oh, I see. Off-the-shelf things.

WATSON: Off-the-shelf things. And the pant leg needed to be shortened. Why, he would complain bitterly about what a dry cleaner would charge.

Did I know what they charged?" I said, "Of course, I know what they charge." "Well, that's ridiculous. That isn't twenty minutes of work." I'd look at him and say, "Jesse, you could not do it in twenty minutes." And would take them home and do them. As I told you, I was trained as a dressmaker.

DOUGLASS: That's right.

WATSON: But, interestingly enough, if the side seam tore on something, if it was something he liked, there were times when I would say, "It is an absolute disgrace that you hang onto this." "Oh, but I like it." So I mended it.

DOUGLASS: You were like his wonderful sister or something?

WATSON: Something of that sort.

DOUGLASS: Well, what about cars and houses? This is kind of interesting to explore his attitude towards money and possessions because of this grinding poverty as a child. Did he like fancy cars or did he care about his cars?

WATSON: Well, he cared about them.

DOUGLASS: Well, I am thinking of [Speaker] Willie [L.] Brown's [Jr.] style.

WATSON: Never. No. He was never flamboyant. I say that. Not totally. On the other hand, he had a couple of pink jackets and a couple of powder blue ones. And he had one pink, ruffled dress shirt that went with it. With a dress suit. He

hated wearing them. Again, his weight didn't leave him in comfort. In complete dress. Although, when he dressed, there was that little-boy deal of showing off. On the other hand, he would dodge it as much as possible because, fundamentally, he was not comfortable in these clothes. Because he was a heavy-set man. Like a lot of us, he was fairly top heavy.

DOUGLASS: He would have had a large neck size.

WATSON: Yes, he did. The arm lengths were thirty-three.

DOUGLASS: In fact, a man like that you would almost think would go to a tailor or would have things made.

WATSON: As I say, the sports things, the jogging suits, and that kind of thing. It was like going to Sacramento and all the socks I had washed, where he and [Jerome R.] Waldie over the years. . . . God, dozens and dozens and dozens of them.

DOUGLASS: Men don't like to wash socks, do they?

WATSON: [Laughter] They really just don't.

DOUGLASS: So, this was a mixed thing. Conscious of money and bargains, but liking some of the expensive things?

WATSON: Yes. There is no doubt that he liked expensive things. And most of the time--I don't know if he did this with everyone--he could not keep from letting you know its monetary value.

DOUGLASS: What about going out to eat?

WATSON: In those days, he picked up the tab constantly.

DOUGLASS: Would that be his personal money?

WATSON: I have a feeling, and I can't prove it. Truly, I don't think it was his personal money, literally, at any time. In his speaker days, he was magnanimous all over the place. Not the Richard O'Neill-meal deal that no matter where you go, Richard just doesn't find a dime in a pocket anywhere. That is a standing joke about Richard O'Neill. Somebody else picks up the tab. The story has always been that no wonder he is worth \$357 million.

DOUGLASS: It seems to work that way.

WATSON: He just never had it anywhere around.
[Laughter] Oh, that used to be said about Richard two-thirds of the time. Jesse did better in the treasurer's office of not just always being the first person to pick up a tab.

DOUGLASS: Well, did he like to go to fancy restaurants?
[Interruption]
Did he personally enjoy a fine restaurant or did that matter to him?

WATSON: I don't know whether he really enjoyed it. It was an interesting thing about him. If he was drinking, he ate everything in sight. It didn't make any difference whether if you were at McDonald's [Restaurant] or whether if you were at Scandia's [Restaurant]. There was a tie-in between alcohol and food. It made no difference

whether he needed it or not. I am not even sure if he was even hungry.

DOUGLASS: Well, alcohol makes some people want to eat more, that's for sure.

WATSON: This was certainly true. But when he did not drink, he did not appear to be a very heavy eater.

DOUGLASS: So that is why quitting the two certainly took his weight down?

WATSON: Right. His form of dieting is enough to make you shudder. It wasn't until his latter years that he finally realized that you do have to consume some food each day. Originally, it would be a deal of just deciding to diet. When you knocked off the liquor, you simply upped the coffee and the Coke [Coca Cola] or the 7-Up, and you had no solid food at all. It was, from my viewpoint, the most outlandish way of dieting that ever happened.

DOUGLASS: That could be injurious to your health.

WATSON: From my viewpoint, I felt that it was. It was something we never saw eye-to-eye about. In that respect, the man was amazing. I don't think I ever met anybody who had the ability for self-discipline that this man had. The problem was that it came and went. It was not something you could live with day after day after day. But if he made up his mind about a given thing

or a given plan, his self-discipline was phenomenal. Either for a given object or a given time.

DOUGLASS: He said, "In the next six months, I am going to lose so much weight."

WATSON: And he could do it. This was true literally in any area if he was desirous of accomplishing something. He could enact discipline better than practically anybody I know.

DOUGLASS: So this applied within the legislature phase. If he had a goal, he would focus?

WATSON: I think so. In some of the reading I have done lately, that was true about the man, which was not something that has ever been particularly talked about.

DOUGLASS: I have certainly read about this fantastic weight loss that he accomplished, when he made up his mind to do it.

WATSON: But he did it in such a hard way. He didn't do it logically. Nor did he do it whereby he could live with it from there on out.

DOUGLASS: Although he did keep it down. He didn't gain all that back?

WATSON: He didn't gain up to 300 pounds, but he would get back up to 250, 260. He would go back and forth. Every time he went through this, it was just a little tougher to lose the weight than it was the time before.

DOUGLASS: This is the kind of thing you would try to say to him, I am sure, "This is not good for you. Why don't you try another way?" How would he accept that kind of analysis?

WATSON: His remark was, "This is the only way I can do it." And that was the answer. It didn't make any difference. From my viewpoint, it was not logical, but, by the same token, it was such that his statement was, "I can't do it any other way."

DOUGLASS: Do you think, eventually, some of what you said, like "that is not good for your health," sunk in a little? Or did you think it was just blocked?

WATSON: I have no idea. In his latter years, because we would go down to the ranch, the avocado ranch, we would stop at that place out by Corona that has all the fresh fruit. Oh, we would come home with the darndest amount of stuff you had ever seen. It was the same way as my raising the tomatoes, the radishes, and the bell peppers.

[End Tape 4, Side A]

[Begin Tape 4, Side B]

DOUGLASS: Then you would take the tomatoes down there.

WATSON: No. We would stop at the fruit stand, and we would buy all sorts of stuff. If we stopped, going down, you can rest assured that we rinsed them off at the faucet. I carry a pen knife in my handbag, and I have for years. If we were taking my car, there would be a roll of paper towels in it. And you had fresh fruit and fresh vegetables. My recollection of his dieting, years back, was he just didn't bother with anything except fluids. And that is, from my viewpoint, no proper way to diet.

DOUGLASS: Was the ranch a great place for him to relax? Did he like going down?

WATSON: Well, yes. Originally, it was fascinating. And, originally, when he first got it, Mrs. Virginia Unruh went down, and the kids went down. The novelty wore off when Mrs. [Christine] Chris Unruh came into the picture. In the beginning, it was lovely. But as time went on, it wore on everybody.

It was a day's outing for me that was lovely. You tromped up and down those hills. You came home dirty and a mess, and I loved it. The place had been originally purchased by some princess who was an actress. I don't have any idea what her name was. And there was a home, a

small California house on it and a guest house. It had its own natural spring.

DOUGLASS: Oh, how nice.

WATSON: Originally, it had an aviary. And it had a swimming pool.

DOUGLASS: What was the acreage? Do you have any idea how big it was?

WATSON: Well, it totalled thirty-one acres.

DOUGLASS: And how long ago did he acquire that?

WATSON: I think he had it around fifteen years before the state came in on Highway 15E. That took a good portion of it. Then the rest of it was sold. But it had three magnificent macadamia trees. Gorgeous trees. It had--what was left--a dozen or a dozen-and-a-half valencia and navel oranges. A tangerine. A magnificent kumquat tree right beside the pool. It had sapotes. And shermoyas. And guavas. And quinces. And two kinds of plums. Apricots. These had been planted some twenty-odd years earlier, so some of these were almost to the valueless stage. The deciduous fruit. The kumquats were lovely.

That is where I started canning kumquats as a result of that. I just had a fit about this kind of a deal. So I would bring sacks of these things back. I finally planted a tree in my yard, and it didn't do well. Today, I probably have a ten- to twelve-foot tree. It must be

wider than your desk. It produces a hundred, hundred twenty-five pounds of fruit each year. It is a beautiful, gorgeous tree, in my backyard.

DOUGLASS: When did he find the time to do this?

WATSON: We would go down about once every six weeks in order to see how it was cared for.

DOUGLASS: There was a foreman?

WATSON: A foreman. So you knew they were getting the amount of zinc, or whatever it was. And whether they were being watered. This kind of thing. The greatest time span would be two months. More often, about six weeks. Sometimes it would be midweek, or depending on if he had a free day. Or a Saturday. It was 110 miles from my house. And we took my car, mainly because he drove Cadillacs and Lincoln Continentals. They were very difficult to get up and down the dirt roads that are on the sides of the hills. My car was smaller and would do so.

This is why I say, in these latter years when he was at the treasurer level, it was such that we were driving my car, and he drove. And we were on a freeway--you can't get off just whenever you want--and that gave me time to expound some of the theories that I had.

[Laughter]

DOUGLASS: So you would talk to him.

WATSON: Oh, yes. Sometimes there was not agreement. As I say, that is how I found out if my car would drive eighty miles an hour. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: You would have a few moments there?

WATSON: Yes. I kind of waited to see what happened.

DOUGLASS: Did you ever say anything?

WATSON: Not about that. I never did. The scene would only come up if there was a difference of opinion in conversation. The chin went out three-eighths of an inch. I didn't know what I was talking about. He would be annoyed. Another fifty miles down the highway, it would calm down, and that was it.

DOUGLASS: You really felt free to tell him what you thought?

WATSON: Oh, yes. I would say these last ten, twelve years, it was true. I expounded on things at times that I knew that my attitude or my thoughts about it didn't conform with what either he wanted to do or he was thinking. Planning. What I really did was just speak my piece. And point out why I saw it my way, and then waited to see what would happen.

DOUGLASS: Well, if he disagreed with you very markedly, would his reaction be in words or sticking his jaw out?

- WATSON: Most of the time I "didn't know what I was talking about." And his jaw would come out. And "how foolish can you be?" And that was it.
- DOUGLASS: But sometimes were you able to spark in him a good discussion?
- WATSON: Oh, yes. And the thing that was interesting was when you expounded on something, not necessarily always on the things you disagreed with him, but you were pointing out a whole theory of yours. And then, maybe six weeks or two months later, you would hear it in a conversation and you would think, "That sure sounds familiar." By this time in my life, I had learned to keep my mouth shut.
- DOUGLASS: So you didn't point out that he had first heard it from you?
- WATSON: That's right. Back in the speaker days, I had made the error of wanting to be sure that I had been given credit about something. It was interesting, I had a man say to me just this last week. He said, "You know, Madale, you are the only woman that I ever, ever heard Jesse speak of as though you were peer level." I guess I should be very honored to know that had finally come to pass. Because I don't think that he really thought that women were very good in the political environment. I think there were women he had respect for, but I don't

really think that he considered them good in the political world.

DOUGLASS: As operating politicians?

WATSON: Yes. That's right. I think I told you. I suppose I am terribly critical, but I know only two or three women that I have a great deal of respect and admiration for. And I guess there is some truth in all of that. Otherwise, you would have more women in the top level of business, corporate America, the legislature here, or in congress. You would certainly have more women than we have today, if women were considered equal and took command in respect to both their sex and the opposite sex.

DOUGLASS: Or, I suppose another way to look at it might be that the rules of the game could be altered a little bit, in which situation women might look better.

WATSON: Another interesting thing is that I am not at all convinced, in my mind, that women's basic problem is [not] other women. Fundamentally, I don't think the majority of women really believe that women can be, or should be, superior to men. In that particular arena, I don't believe that the United States is equal to any number of other countries.

DOUGLASS: Fund raising for women candidates certainly has done better more recently, but women have not given to women candidates.

In other words, this very business of your being a peer, the only woman he thought of as a peer, he didn't appear to be out in the forefront?

WATSON: Well, I didn't see it that way. I have to say to you that was a remark made by a gentleman that knew him quite well. I was surprised because the women in his life were by the dozens.

DOUGLASS: He knew a lot of women?

WATSON: He did. For an individual that was not physically good-looking, he had a charisma that absolutely appealed to any number of human beings.

DOUGLASS: That is an interesting question. He did have a solid following. How would you define that charisma?

WATSON: Well, there were three things about him that I found fascinating. He had blue eyes that had a twinkle and softness to them that would make you feel you were quite important. He had the softest hands. The only other person who has hands as equally as soft is my husband. And, good lord, if we are going to have anything besides being just lukewarm [hot], I am the one

who has to handle it. He has got to be covered with gloves. There is no toughness to them at all.

I think the other thing about Unruh was the tone of his voice. Now, I can remember saying to him about this last campaign, "For heaven's sake, let's not spend a dime on television." And I didn't believe we should have spent any money on television in '82. He didn't televise well, and he was not particularly attractive. But I have heard radio tapes that we did in '74 and '78, and, I can tell you, he has the most persuasive tone of voice on tape that you could ever ask for. From my viewpoint, radio was totally the media in which he should have contacted the public. He could sound, at times, just like a thunder cloud and brutal, and, on the other times, he was interesting and practically convinced you to do most anything he wanted done.

DOUGLASS: He was persuasive not only in tone but also in the use of words?

WATSON: I think so, too. I have a stack of speeches back in the speaker's days that I think were just outstanding kinds of speeches. The one man who wrote speeches for him, there were times I could never tell whether he had written it or

whether this man had written it. Otherwise, I could always tell when Jesse had written a speech and when he had not. At least, as far as I was concerned, and I think there was only once or twice when I guessed wrong and it had been done by somebody else.

DOUGLASS: Did he write his major speeches himself? How did he divide that up?

WATSON: Originally, he wrote his own speeches.

DOUGLASS: Then under the pressure of time he got somebody else?

WATSON: Eventually, he got to the place where he was making lots of them. Or when you got into a campaign, you had to have somebody else. But there was only one man who I felt could sense how he would put words together and what kind of words he would use.

DOUGLASS: I was interested in when he became treasurer, which is another phase of his career. Was he mellower or less uptight?

WATSON: Oh, yes. He was easier then. When he lost the governor's race in '70, he went to work for a health industry, and it didn't take seven months in '71 to realize that he just hated being confined to a nine-to-five job and at a desk. He literally despised it.

DOUGLASS: Probably a good-paying job, too?

WATSON: That I don't know. I do know he disliked it

intensely. And one of the reasons, I think, that caused him to run for mayor.

DOUGLASS: Mayor of Los Angeles. Right.

WATSON: By the time he lost that one, he was very unhappy. The political environment was totally to his liking, and he really was distressed at having to go in and operate under the rules of corporate America. He was just ill at ease. He didn't care for it. My statement in terms of his ability for self-discipline is an interesting trait when, also, he was one of the world's greatest procrastinators. He would storm and fuss about something. I can remember him once saying, "Madale, if you just leave things alone, nine times out of ten, they will take care of themselves." I was storming about not getting something done, and that was his answer to me. You were aware that he just didn't see the necessity of getting it all taken care of in a given twenty-four-hour period.

DOUGLASS: So after he became treasurer, he was back at something he liked to do?

WATSON: Oh, yes.

DOUGLASS: Comparing him then to the days when he had been in the assembly and the pressure of not only being speaker, but the pressure to run for governor. Was he, in a sense, happier?

WATSON: I think he took things more in his stride, it seemed to me. He was not above doing exactly what he had done all of his life. He played with people literally the way a child will play with toys. Well, there are two sides to this. He played people, one against the other. He had things constantly at a simmering kettle, if not a boiling one. And that has its advantages, but it also has its disadvantages. It allows you to literally keep control--if you are real smart--that you know what is going on at all times, all places. Because if you put these two people kind of at each other, they both came back, and they both gave you their version of things. On the other hand, it frequently brought out the most unpleasant traits in other human beings.

DOUGLASS: Could that also come to the point where the two just exploded? I mean they were just not simmering, they were lashing out.

WATSON: Most of the time, he could keep those under control.

DOUGLASS: That is quite a large talent.

WATSON: That is a talent. He did this, and he had something bubbling most of the time. But he could keep on top of it. This is what has really created the problem with this acting treasurer. These people all believed that they were equally as smart at handling human beings,

and most of them are not. And the other thing that is interesting is the fact that to run the office, career people keep it going for you. I believe the story is that, by and large, he moved people. I think I only know, in thirty-five years, three people that he really outright fired.

DOUGLASS: Oh, really.

WATSON: He was not inclined to fire people.

DOUGLASS: Now these three were for real cause?

WATSON: As far as I know, these were for honest-to-goodness real cause, and, even then, it took a long time to get it accomplished. He moved people around, or he did what many executives do. Life becomes just unpleasant enough that you opt out. Which I think is always the chicken way of doing it.

DOUGLASS: But he didn't like the personal confrontation?

WATSON: No. And the politicking part of this didn't have a thing to do with the actual operation of the office proper. And, from my viewpoint, these people, since his death, don't understand that the politicking part of it isn't nearly as important. Because this man didn't have to be kept in this position any longer.

Something else has to replace him. And, yet, from my point of view, there were a number

of people involved in this present situation who seem to believe that the political side of it is absolutely essential, and they know how to do it. I am sitting on the sidelines, watching and thinking that you just don't have the gift that the boss had, and, therefore, you've got problems.

DOUGLASS: In terms of replacing him, this whole business of [Congressman Dan E.] Lungren being appointed by [Governor George C.] Deukmejian and the Democrats opposing him, do you think that is out of proportion, everybody's reaction to this?

WATSON: I do not believe that Mr. Lungren is the ogre that some of these people are saying. I understand the power play and that type of thing. But I don't view either Mr. Deukmejian or Mr. Lungren as a rip-roaring, reactionary Republican. I concede the fact that they are Republicans, and they may be even middle-of-the road. They are not particularly moderate Republicans. But you find nothing in Mr. Lungren's background. He doesn't beat his wife. He hasn't absconded with money. His constituency, apparently, is perfectly happy with the majority of his votes in congress. There is nothing about him--as far as I can find out from anybody--that is shady in terms of ethics or honesty.

Why is it that it would be such a catastrophe if this man came into the treasurer's position? Mr. Unruh did not know how these various sections of this particular office ran when he came in. He was not an authority on investment when he was elected. It appears to me that this man, certainly it may not be run exactly as it has been, but I don't think we will suddenly discover that all the bonds go down to B bonds instead of triple-A.

DOUGLASS: Isn't the whole thing really about, I guess, a comment that Deukmejian dropped about Lungren being very valuable out in the hustings, in terms of promoting Republican candidates?

WATSON: I don't doubt that in the least.

DOUGLASS: Is that what it is all about?

WATSON: I feel it has to be, to a degree, because had he selected Senator [Kenneth L.] Maddy, I am told, the Democrats would not have screamed to high heaven.

DOUGLASS: I heard that.

WATSON: I understand that very simply because the Democrats have looked at that district, and they know it is an open spot. There is a chance that you could elect a Democratic senator, which is a power play in the vote, within the senate, to retain Mr. Roberti.

The problems in the assembly are the same pattern. Mr. Brown has been there long enough that the decisions he has made, in competition with the ambitions of assemblymen, that you have five dissidents. This comes because somebody else's ego wants something. The man has made some mistakes, as all human beings have to do, and you have some with the idea that he has had for eight years, or whatever it is, and why shouldn't somebody else share it. And, really, with no more need of reasoning than just that.

DOUGLASS: Well, also, do you think part of this is that Maddy is a member of the legislature, which would mean that there would be a little better response than to someone who serves in the Congress?

WATSON: I don't think so. I think it is pure power. I think the story that the economy will simply go downhill, I truly don't believe that. Periodically, the League-of-Women-Voters hat gets on the top of my head, and I begin to rationalize, rather than being a good partisan Democrat. I can't buy the story that any Democrat is better than a Republican. Because if the Democrat is an outright crook, just because he is a registered Democrat, I don't find myself being able to go out and work for

him. That fouls me up every once in a while with some of the other desires that people have.

DOUGLASS: Well, to get back to Jesse Unruh, you made one comment to me, when we were just talking, that I thought was interesting because you said that Unruh made you feel good about yourself. And your comment had been about the fact you didn't have a college degree. I wondered if you could, on the tape, comment about that. I think it had to do with his respect and your knowledge and your information base.

WATSON: Well, I guess, it was the fact that if we go back into the seventies and eighties, in discussions in terms of district operation or in terms of people or pieces of legislation and the whys and the lobbyist things and so forth, the man never scoffed or just tossed me off as though "that is ridiculous" or "that's stupid." I don't have any recollection of this man ever saying that kind of a thing to me. I do remember him at times saying, "Madale, you are all wrong. You have not thought it out." That is the kind of verbiage he used with me. And my reaction was that I was not being considered just total trivia.

DOUGLASS: This was before you knew him really well? Or as you were getting to know him?

WATSON: This didn't happen in the first ten years. This was after 1960 and the [Senator J.] Kennedy [presidential] campaign, and as I worked with him along the way. There are times in campaigns when I would come in just storming, and it was just "bang, bang, bang, bang," as far as I was concerned, with what I was talking about. Frequently, he would throw just one sentence or one question that would just bring me up short and make me stop and think. And then we would go on from there. That kind of thing.

DOUGLASS: But he just didn't cut you off?

WATSON: No.

DOUGLASS: He respected you.

WATSON: Yes. And another thing he did in the 1960 Kennedy presidential campaign, we had a headquarters just east of Alvarado [Street] on Beverly Boulevard. My assignment was to get all political materials to all of the headquarters, from San Luis Obispo to El Centro, supplied with the materials that they needed. This was position papers, bumper stickers, buttons, all the gimmickry that you have for selling to pick an extra dime here and there. That type of thing. We did it in coordination with speakers who were being sent out to places or to the various units of people--the Youth for Kennedy, the Veterans for Kennedy--and this type of

thing. And I made a decision about something one day--I don't even remember what it was--and I got a call to come into his office. This was in the morning. I was asked as to why I had done this. I got informed that I had no right to do it.

DOUGLASS: This is Unruh's office?

WATSON: This is Unruh. He was the southern California campaign manager. And he just read the riot act to me. Absolutely, he just chewed me out but good. I was in error, and I was just out of line. We had a staff meeting at three o'clock that afternoon, and that which he had balled me out for in the morning, he just assumed the responsibility for, in the staff meeting, to everybody in there.

DOUGLASS: Oh, really.

WATSON: Just like that. You would have never known that I had been the individual who had caught hell for this. He also informed everybody that there would not even be a five-cent pencil purchased in the future. There would be nothing committed or purchased from that hour on until he could be sure of where he could raise another dollar. Every ounce of money, apparently, had been spent in that campaign at that moment. And he would not allow one more obligation until he could be

sure as to where money was coming from. And he was very adamant about it. By the same token, the rest of that group of people that were in that headquarters at that time in no way were aware on this one thing that I was at fault.

DOUGLASS: Was it because you had gone against the rules? Or you made a judgment that he thought you should not have made?

WATSON: That's right. I had made a judgment that he felt that he should have made, that I should not have. It was incorrect because I didn't understand the circumstances. I was not aware of what the problems were.

DOUGLASS: I suppose, in the heat of a campaign, you are faced with that problem a lot, feeling that time is so precious.

WATSON: That's correct.

DOUGLASS: That's a tough one, isn't it? Both from his end and your end.

WATSON: That is exactly right. But I have to tell you that it is an amazing thing, the impression that particular act had upon me. The same thing happened to me in '60 in the school board campaign with John Gaffney. And I just caught it one day with him. With that one, I went home with a migraine headache. I was just sick by the time John got through with me. On the other hand, when it came to staff operations, John

Gaffney never acknowledged that I was the one who made the error.

DOUGLASS: So that impressed you.

WATSON: That was the result of my always having great faith in Gaffney, too. The loyalty was amazing. But it was that kind of thing that had great effect upon my actions and my attitude with Unruh.

DOUGLASS: So you learned?

WATSON: Yes. One of these happened in '60 with Unruh, the second one with Gaffney in the spring of '59. Then, in '62, I went right ahead and did something I knew had to be done and time to me was running out on this Get-Out-The-Vote thing, and that is when Margolis blew up at me, who was Unruh's man. If everybody did what I done, the whole thing was out of control. There was no general, no keeping track. In that one, I just took the dressing-down but good. I knew good and well that Margolis was the kind who was very difficult to ever get back into his good graces. He was a hatchet man of the first degree.

But when he came to California--he went to Kansas City and then he went to Colorado for the legislative conference which upgraded legislatures throughout the county--and he came home and finally went back to work in the treasurer's office. Now, Larry is not one of

the youngsters. So when he came back in that-- we were with the problem of fund raising and that type of thing with Unruh and the treasurer's [office]--I had gone all through the seventies as the treasurer of the state party, and I understood the problems and the intricacies of their political practices.

So I just sat Larry down one day after there were problems and said, "Now, look, dear. I stood in awe of you all through the sixties. But I have to tell you, sweetie pie, we are now in a place where I am the one who understands the problems. You have been gone from our state long enough you don't know, you don't have all the ifs, ands, and buts that go on with the political reporting. And I have to tell you, this is how it must be done."

DOUGLASS: And how did he take that?

WATSON: He took it. I just said, "Larry, you just have to understand. The game is somewhat different from what it was in the fifties and sixties. And these are things you must be worried about. And I have to tell you now, honey, if you don't worry about them, you are going to get nagged." And I have had a very excellent rapport with Larry Margolis from the day he came back.

DOUGLASS: Going back to these earlier days, he was sort of painted, as you said, as a hatchet man, do you

think he deserved that image he had?

WATSON: Margolis?

DOUGLASS: Yes.

WATSON: Oh, Margolis was tough. There is no doubt about it.

DOUGLASS: Not subtle?

WATSON: Margolis is quite capable of arm-twisting. I don't think he is as heavy-handed today as he was twenty-five years ago. On the other hand, he can be one of the most cold, coldblooded gentlemen I have ever known.

DOUGLASS: Obviously, Unruh had a lot of faith in him, placed a lot of trust in him. What was that relationship?

WATSON: I don't know. Jesse would get so angry with him. He would get him in a room and just chew him out unmercifully at times. Well, I don't know whether this was true or not, but I know Jesse, in the later years, would say, "You know, he couldn't get a job if it was not for me. Other people would just not hire him." And this comes back not to his ability. It was his disposition, I think.

DOUGLASS: Apparently, his disposition?

WATSON: But once I got over being fearful of him, the disposition no longer bothered me. But, then again, there is a number of these people who

will tell you that Madale Watson can be just the ugliest individual that ever happened.

DOUGLASS: Oh, really?

WATSON: Yes. And I am a little startled when somebody says that to me. And they will say, "You just don't have any idea of how tough you come on." The truth of the matter is that I don't really realize that. I have people say to me today, "Oh, you just have no idea of how you have mellowed." Well, if being able to know that there is a far larger spectrum of gray than black and white, then, yes, I suppose you can say I have mellowed. I have lived long enough to know that very few things are pure white or solid black. They are all that whole spectrum in between, and you ought to give some consideration to that. I can very clearly remember when I thought there was just right and wrong, period.

DOUGLASS: The young tend to do that. One other thing you said about Unruh, I guess, in the sixties you had a closer relationship. That you felt you could take a real problem to him, like a personal problem, and he would respond to that need.

WATSON: He did. There were any number of things.

DOUGLASS: These were personal, not political?

WATSON: These were personal problems. This was in terms

of the daughter and a couple of deaths. And my husband was not around.

DOUGLASS: So you could talk it out with him.

WATSON: Yes. You could talk it out.

DOUGLASS: He had empathy, I gather?

WATSON: It would be, "It will be all right, poor baby."
[Laughter] I wonder how many women he said that to. [Laughter] But the tone of voice was so very comforting.

DOUGLASS: And you had unloaded this thing.

WATSON: And I have a feeling that innumerable people did this to him. I really do. Because there were a couple of remarks that he made that makes me believe this. There was no ability to be intense about anyone because so many people wanted a small amount. And when you have to give a little bit to this vast number of people, there was nothing left. I can remember him once trying to explain this to me.

This is why I have a bad time. No matter how indignant I get about his children, and his wife, and the former wife, I am convinced, in my mind, that he did love them to the best of his ability. Not satisfactorily to any of them. And, mainly, as I look at it today and try to sit over here and get it out in front of me and try to see if I can be objective, my only rationale is that each one wanted more than he

was able to give. And that is how I see it. I guess, whenever it was along the way that I came to this belief, I came to be a considerably more understanding human being. In my case, I accepted that. In all honesty, it was a long road to arrive at acceptance and be decent about it.

DOUGLASS: Accepting that you have your little part of what he was able to give?

WATSON: Yes. And many is the day and many is the time when that portion was not big enough to satisfy me. But I came to the realization that this was it. And you should learn how to accept it and be decent about it. My observation today is that very few of them are capable as yet of doing that. Also, I am weary of hearing the people who say, "Well, he didn't like his kids." I don't believe that to be true at all.

DOUGLASS: You knew both wives. You knew Virginia.

WATSON: Yes.

DOUGLASS: You got along with her?

WATSON: No. Mrs. Unruh did not allow anybody to get along real well with her.

DOUGLASS: Then how about Chris Unruh? The second wife.

WATSON: As far as I know, it has always been a cordial relationship. At this moment, I am a little dubious about an awful lot of things. Where I sit in this mess.

DOUGLASS: You are sorting all of this?

WATSON: Yes. You almost have to. Fundamentally, the jury is out on this one. There are too many people still playing games. I don't really know what it is they believe they are going to have when they are done.

DOUGLASS: It is a true mess, I guess.

WATSON: Yes.

[Interruption]

DOUGLASS: What I want to do is pick up in the fifties. You said that you fought him in meetings and sometimes you argued. You usually agreed on the vote. I am trying to get the rhythm of this. What really happened by the end of the fifties in terms of your knowing Unruh?

WATSON: I don't really remember much about the 1958 campaign because he was the southern California chairman of the Pat Brown campaign. And John Gaffney was the southern California chairman of the Clair Engle campaign. And I worked with John Gaffney in the Clair Engle United States senatorial [campaign]. These were in two different places.

DOUGLASS: The physical locations. In Los Angeles?

WATSON: Yes. In Los Angeles, for the southern section of the state. As a result, I did not come in contact a great deal with Jesse, other than the

whole gossip circle about his infatuation with a young woman who had gone into that campaign. And his problems of his ups and down with Susie Clifton, who was a fund raiser in the Brown campaign. The two did not agree a great deal at that time.

In '59, I believe it was '59, anyway, it was the state convention at that time--it may have been in August of '58--anyway, Jesse and I were the cochairs out of our congressional district of the state central committee at that time. And I called him one day, and I said that I was considering rerunning because you needed to check with your state committee people to get their vote on that. It was voted upon among the state committee people who worked within your district. He said, "Well, I want [] Katie Simms." Katie was a delightful young woman who was black and was in the labor movement. He pointed out that the district was having an increase in Negro population.

[End Tape 4, Side B]

[Begin Tape 5, Side A]

DOUGLASS: So this was the cochair?

WATSON: This was the cochair within the congressional district. And he explained to me why he thought this would be advantageous to the district, the influx of Negro citizenry to the district. And my remark was, "Well, but she has to work." She could not give it the time I could. I had found it enjoyable, and I liked it. That I had done a satisfactory job in helping to develop clubs. I was the treasurer of the organization. I did a lot of what is known as the peon work and so forth. Anyway, he said, "You can be whatever you want, but Katie is going to be the new cochair."

DOUGLASS: Very businesslike about it?

WATSON: Yes. Perfectly all right. I said, "OK." And hung up. I had the names of these people in my possession, as I had everything else in the district. So I simply got on the telephone and called all the people who were going to Sacramento and asked them for their vote. We went to Sacramento, and we went up on the sixth floor to Assemblyman Unruh's office, and the Fifteen Congressional District, called the meeting to order. Jesse was nominated the male cochair and elected unanimously. And, opened up the women's chair, and Katie was nominated, and

Madale was nominated. We had a secret ballot, and Katie got nine votes, and Madale got ten votes. Mr. Unruh simply announced this and gaveled the meeting ended. Stomped out of the room madder than a hornet.

DOUGLASS: He figured that he had his votes lined up probably.

WATSON: He hit the elevator with the chairman of the district's county committee, saying to him as they got to the elevator, "But Jesse, we didn't know what you wanted. You didn't program with us." And Jesse just stomped out and went on down. I went back to the El Mirador [Hotel], where I was staying, in absolute tears. I was just overwhelmed that we had ended up like this. Mr. Unruh didn't speak to me for four months. [Laughter] This must have been in the latter part of. . . . Because it is '59 that we are into a school board campaign and the building for that is right next door to the Democratic headquarters on Vermont Avenue at Third [Street].

DOUGLASS: School board at what level?

WATSON: Los Angeles City. I worked school board campaigns as a volunteer for, I think, '51, '53, '55, '57, '59, and '61. It's in '59, that Gaffney says to me, while we are in the school board thing, "You know, Madale, I thought you

were a good politician?" I said, "I work at it." He said, "Why don't you make your peace with Jesse?" My remark was, "What the hell have I done? I didn't do anything wrong." John just smiled. John had come out of the [Thomas J.] Pendergast machine in Kansas City. John said, "I know you have not done anything wrong, but you really ought to make peace." Well, I sputtered and thought about it for two weeks.

I finally picked up the phone one morning, called Mr. Unruh. I finally got hold of him. You know, well, he "thought things were not so bad." The school district was doing pretty good. The next story was, "Well, couldn't you think of anything that needed to be done?" I finally said, "Now, Jesse, this is Mohammad coming to the mountain. Really, I would feel much better if you could possibly give me a few minutes. I know you are very busy." The typical ballet routine that you do. He ended up, "Well, all right. How about a cup of coffee at the Cloud Motel." Which was just around the corner at that time. I don't know what morning it was. So, I met him. We proceeded to talk district. Things calmed down and were all right from there.

I think somewhere I told you that, on January 10, 1960, the state central committee's

WATSON: executive board meeting was at the El Mirador Hotel in Palm Springs. A young woman who worked in his office down here and I drove to Palm Springs with him for this meeting. And from the Los Angeles River clear to Palm Springs, I think this man sang country western songs almost the entire four-hour trip. And a couple of them had like ninety-nine verses, and, I tell you, he knew every verse.

DOUGLASS: What kind of a singing voice did he have?

WATSON: Very good, for that kind of thing. He loved it. He loved country western music. His memory was such he could remember [everything]. Then there were the USC songs that dealt with the unity unit that was over there that was inclined to be left wing. There were a couple of Communist songs that also had innumerable verses. They got to be where they were almost like folktales. But, anyway, that was it.

[Interruption]

DOUGLASS: How did you get along at that meeting?

WATSON: We went to that meeting and, from there on out, Jesse and I didn't have any more squabbles. As I say, we found ourselves almost always voting exactly alike, even though we arrived at our decisions from different avenues.

DOUGLASS: So you personally got along well?

WATSON: From there on out did very well. Later on, I went into that Kennedy campaign as part of staff.

DOUGLASS: You were paid staff.

WATSON: Paid staff at that time. I got a reputation as being one of the toughest gals that ever happened for materials. That campaign distributed a million and a half bumper stickers in southern California alone. There were 246 or 256 headquarters and, periodically, you were just moving this material out in wholesale fashion, but you didn't see it out. Quarter cards or bumper stickers. You began to wonder what had happened. I think it was about the first of October when a young man came in from Boston who was the brother of a labor man. They were typical Irish Bostonians. Fascinating people. And this young man had arrived in town by train. His brother brought him into the headquarters.

The following morning, never having been in southern California--and I didn't drive--this youngster was given a Volkswagen truck. He started out at nine o'clock, one morning, and we covered Los Angeles County and into San Bernardino County. And I walked in unannounced to [John F.] Kennedy-[Lyndon B.] Johnson headquarters. I simply marched in without ever

saying who I was or anything else. I looked the headquarters over, and I proceeded to walk right straight through them to their bathrooms and their restrooms and the whole works. And I knew whether they were hoarding political materials or whether they really didn't have any. I never took such a ribbing. I ended up making an equal number of friends and enemies over that mess. We got back after dark that night.

That young man's story later on was absolutely that this was the most ghastly day he had ever been [through]. Here was a county he had never been in, and here was a woman who absolutely was determined to cover the whole works in twenty-four hours. [Laughter] I have lost the name of the young man. A delightful young man. What an initiation he got for Los Angeles County. But that was my responsibility, and I maintain that we were spending a small fortune and we were short on money. I had a bad time having any appreciation of one Edward [S.] Kennedy. He was a young college student in that day.

DOUGLASS: Was he in law school at that time?

WATSON: I don't know where he was in school, but he was with John [V.] Tunney and a gentleman who ultimately went to Hawaii and became a state senator over there. Anyway, there was a whole

clique of young people out from the Ivy League universities in the East, and they gave us more headaches than you knew what to do with. And they went the circuit of the Riverside, Imperial, San Bernardino Counties as though your mass of voters were going to be there. They were the greatest headache we ever had in trying to run a campaign that fundamentally didn't have a lot of money and needed a lot of work.

This is what the easterners do to you even yet. They come out, literally, on a junket. They come to California for two reasons. It is delightful here in the wintertime. Or it is delightful in the early spring when everybody else has got snow. And, possibly, these last couple of years this has not happened, but up to this time, they came into our state and they put the money in their satchel and took it home. And we had to worry about how in the devil we ever got it all raised, and they just took it out of the state and put it where they could get more votes than they ever could from here. This has gone on in the fifties, in the sixties, and in the seventies. They bled us blind, in terms of money. And because we didn't have patronage, or we could not always deliver, in terms of votes, they put it where they could get their votes for it.

DOUGLASS: Well, that has been discussed as a problem even up to now, depending on the pot of gold out there.

WATSON: That's exactly right. Except the present chairman, as I understand it, raised a million dollars in San Francisco a week or ten days ago and, allegedly, it is to remain in the state. Again, forty, forty-five congressmen make a considerable difference to your weight in Washington, as against the time I am talking about. Twenty-five years ago.

DOUGLASS: Right. A different time. Well, any other anecdotes out of that John Kennedy campaign that you can think of?

WATSON: Yes, there is a couple of instances where I look back and laugh. My problem for twenty years or something was my birthday was the same day as Jesse Unruh's.

DOUGLASS: Oh, right. September 30.

WATSON: As a result, from the day he became speaker, September 30 was always Jesse's day. I think this has to be '60.

DOUGLASS: He didn't become speaker until '61, but you are getting close.

WATSON: I think this is when it did happen, but I may be wrong. Anyway, it was September 30, and I was in the headquarters, and I was literally alone.

In my typical fashion, being somewhat martyred, cleaning up and doing the things that need to be done to keep things in order. Joe Cerrell came in with one Adlai Stevenson and surveyed the whole deal. And I am sputtering. I am not very happy because the whole crew has gone out with Jesse to celebrate his birthday. And I am not very happy. When Mr. Stevenson and Mr. Cerrell left, they got back out to their chauffeured car to get in, and Stevenson's remark to Joe Cerrell is, "Well, that was an interesting woman."

[Laughter] I will never know whether that was done because he was a little unhappy at listening to somebody who was just bitching beautifully, or whether I had said something that did make some sense. That I will never know.

The other episode on that was the competition that went on between Carmen Warschaw, Ethel Longstreet, and Rosalind Weiner. She may have been Wyman. I don't know. I can't remember when she married [Eugene] Wyman. Because I knew her. I had gone to a CIO headquarters in her campaign for running for city council, when she was twenty-two years old and aiming to be a councilwoman from the fifth district in the city. But, Rosalind always interested me. In fact, I still think she is a

WATSON: very interesting woman and does a lot of good things. And, basically, has a heart. She really does. I stayed always on Friday nights to get the statewide mailer out. It was the night you always got a news item out.

DOUGLASS: This is during an election?

WATSON: In a campaign. [] Jerry Maher was the press man, a good man. He had also gone to school at USC in the forties with Jesse. This particular night, we had a number of volunteers in the large backroom of this place working, when a gentleman came through and wanted to work. He was odd, but I handled him. I can't remember why, but Stanley Mosk came through, and he came back and wanted to know what in the world this man was doing there. He was to be gotten out. I come to find out that the gentleman was on a bicycle, and in his belongings were several knives, including a butcher knife.

Stanley recognized him. He had a prison record. He was unpredictable. Stanley's remark was that he simply could not be allowed to be in that room with the volunteers. We had elderly ladies and young people. He told me, and he also told a couple of other people, and we got rid of him. Stanley moved this man out, if I remember correctly.

Several days or a week later, he appeared again. It was fascinating to discover that there was not a male around to move him out. I had to more or less soft-talk him. Fortunately, we had a narrow passageway from the offices of this thing to this very large workroom. I simply stood between this, where he could not go further on. I placatingly talked him out of deciding that he really wanted to do something and got him out of the building and on the way. I was so annoyed to think that you could not find a man anywhere in the operation when you really needed one on someone who was unpredictable. But this was like having to worry about fuses that burned out. You discovered that your dear men never knew where the hell the things were or what to do with them. In the long haul, you needed a housewife who had come up through the war years and learned how to do all of these things.

DOUGLASS: Was this man sort of suggesting that he would like to help out?

WATSON: Well, we only had him a couple of times. I don't have any idea. Political headquarters get all sorts of peculiar what I guess you would call rather misfits of society looking for some kind of contact with other human beings. In the Unruh '70 campaign, I had a

perfectly delightful woman. Small, petite, immaculately dressed. You knew from her clothing that she had seen a time when she had considerable money because she had beautiful clothes. And she was, I guess one would say, eccentric. Odd, very odd. In the same breath, an excellent worker in terms of routine work.

We had a young man who was from Santa Monica that apparently had gone to pieces in college and got into the army unsuspectingly. Then they discovered what his mental problems were, and he was discharged. I never saw anybody who could turn out the amount of just routine work, of collating, or stuffing, or sealing, or stamping. He could do this hour after hour after hour. But you could never tell when he would just tighten up and not be present. And in a school board campaign I had, I did quite well with him. Until he discovered one day we had liquor in the office. He ultimately threatened me. I moved the liquor out and got it so it was not available. But I realized you had to handle him very carefully, in terms of what struck him wrong or what didn't.

But, on the other hand, as I say, in handling people, for all of my reputation of not

- WATSON: being very charitable in my verbiage in the meetings, I found myself, as far as volunteers were concerned, having all sorts of people. Those who always knew what was best and would not do it the way you asked to have it done, or those who were assemblyline workers that were superb, or the ones who practically ate you out of house and home. [Laughter]
- DOUGLASS: Well, your earlier experience working with volunteers probably helped, don't you think?
- WATSON: Yes. I think the other thing that gave me a great deal of assistance on that was the years I put in on blood banks, where you were handling human beings who were volunteering something, and you needed to be courteous. And you needed to recognize that they were actually giving a gift. You needed to treat them in the fashion that they were due.
- DOUGLASS: Well, it takes a lot of patience to deal with these kinds of people who tend to be attracted to this kind of thing.
- WATSON: Oh, it does.
- DOUGLASS: Don't you think they love the excitement of the campaign?
- WATSON: Yes. It's the excitement. And I am convinced that it is the contact with human beings.
- DOUGLASS: And it is kind of a one-time [thing]. They can move on, they are not obligated.

- WATSON: There is no responsibility on their part whatsoever. I knew if you could lick 500 stamps and put them on letters in thirty-five minutes. I could also tell you exactly, when you were collating a thing, how long it took to do a thousand.
- DOUGLASS: You had a time-and-motion study of your own.
- WATSON: Totally and completely out of the '62 campaign. I did them. So I knew when I wanted five dollars, I could tell you exactly what that five dollars would purchase. If I needed twenty-five [dollars], I could tell you what you were giving us in concrete examples because I had done these kinds of things. I was like being a counter. It was like being able to tell you in the Shrine Auditorium because I am a counter.
- DOUGLASS: I was told that you could eye a dinner and tell how many were paid and how many weren't.
- WATSON: I have done this. I am one of these kind who can tell you exactly whether you had twenty-two or thirty-four diapers hanging on the line. That kind of thing.
- DOUGLASS: You registered how many tables, how many at a table?
- WATSON: I was in a place a couple of weeks ago, and somebody said, "How many people were there?" I said, "Oh, I don't have any idea." "You mean to tell me that you went to that thing and you

didn't. . . ." I said, "No, sir. I forgot to even count. I am getting old." [Laughter] And was fairly accurate. I had the Los Angeles Fire Department and Police Department in that year say, "You are a good estimator." I contacted them to see what they saw it as. Boy, I was right along with them. I am not saying it was this, I just said, "What do you believe?" And I would count.

I did a couple of things at MacArthur Park one year in crowds. What you do is you get to the place where you try to be just the least bit higher than where your people are. The minute you get the speeches where they will stand still, you section it and you count. Then you take a unit. I don't pay any attentions to speeches. Good lord, they all say the same things. You don't have to worry about that. You keep track of the kind of people who are there. What they appear to be. How they look in their dress. What the color of their faces are. What their reaction [is].

DOUGLASS: So you eye the crowd.

WATSON: Oh, yes. I have done this for years. People just fascinate me, that is my problem.

DOUGLASS: Did you ever try to train other people?

WATSON: One of my problems of trying to show people is that I am left-handed. I also work backwards.

Trying to get something turned around for right-handed people, I had to give thought to how you expressed it. Because I went at it backwards. I set up a table at the state committee here a month or so ago, and I got it all done. It worked just beautifully for me. And I thought, "Watson, you idiot. You've got to turn that all the way around. You have done this so that people left-handed do it." I took the table and reassembled it. It was a deal of working on both sides. I had set it up totally backwards to a right-handed person. And thought to myself, "Lord, you should remember at this stage of the game that you have to remember how people who are right-handed will do these things."

You have an awful lot of young people up in Sacramento today who will say, "Oh, yes. I know. I got Mother Watson's character development course." [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: Character development?

WATSON: Yes. Known as character development. Mother Watson's character development.

DOUGLASS: That would include a lot of things.

WATSON: Sure does. And this always goes with it. The forefinger of the left hand going, "Now, young man," or "Now, young lady." I have been doing that for years. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: Well, you have a very affectionate appellation in "mother." They must like you.

Was it in the fifties or into the sixties when you moved from purely volunteer to some kind of being paid staff? In other words, you must have floated back and forth.

WATSON: Yes. I really did. When I looked back the other day on some of the things I was checking to find out what I had been paid in some places, I worked for slave wages most of the time. It was in the campaigns, fundamentally, in fund-raising dinners.

DOUGLASS: Would this be in the fifties?

WATSON: It was into the sixties. Somewhere in that deal--I don't really have the proper dates on it--I coordinated six fund-raising dinners in less than twelve months. In that day, you thought, to do a well-run dinner, you should have at least ten to twelve weeks to prepare and put them together. And you finally found yourself getting them down to like eight weeks.

DOUGLASS: How many people would come?

WATSON: Anything from a breakfast for twenty-five people up to a Kennedy dinner at the Hollywood Palladium or a Johnson dinner at the Palladium, which had 2,500 people in there. This is what always tickled me when Joe Cerrell took full credit for running those things. In the first

place, you had to have the motion picture industry in to create your entertainment. You could not do anything in town without being assured the police and fire departments were covered and those types of things. You had the advance people. You had the press people. You had the additional luncheons or cocktail parties for pledge, which is the monied group.

I don't know if I could raise a hundred dollars as far as going out and asking and getting somebody to say, "I will give you a hundred dollars." As far as the mechanics of how these things need to get done, I had both Fred Hayman, who is Giorgio [products] today. Fred Hayman was the maitre de at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in that day. And Sterling Way handled the Hollywood Palladium. And both of these men asked me why in the world I wasn't doing--what these women are doing now--consulting for fund-raising dinners. Some of them barely make a living, but some of them make a very lucrative living.

DOUGLASS: When you did the dinners, you were paid something, weren't you, to do this?

WATSON: Yes. The most I was ever paid, for like three months work and the follow-up gets into the fourth month, was \$1,500. That was the most I

was ever paid. Most of the time you were doing this for five or six hundred dollars.

DOUGLASS: Let's talk about the two big ones at the Palladium, which involved everything. Every element you can think of, when you are talking about Kennedy and Johnson. Was that in '62?

WATSON: For Kennedy, it must have been in '62. He was killed in '63.

DOUGLASS: November of '63. But it was a couple years after he was elected.

WATSON: Yes.

DOUGLASS: That must have been just a massive undertaking. Were you given a budget?

WATSON: No. Not particularly. You had to make a contract and guarantee so many people. It was not hard to guarantee because your real problem was that the Palladium only handled--even with rechanging it all over the place--no more than 2,400 people.

DOUGLASS: So your contract with the Palladium was to guarantee the attendance.

WATSON: Oh, yes. You make up your mind what kind of menu you are going to have, what you are going to serve, and that kind of a thing. But your problem in this kind of a deal is you guaranteed [meals]. Well, it was like the first Unruh dinner, which was at the Beverly Hilton. That was one that was a fifty-dollar dinner. This is

the one that when it was all over with, everything was finished and wound up, I realized Unruh had done this whole thing. Totally. That, fundamentally, all you really had done was to do what Unruh had wanted done. But I guaranteed over nine hundred. Because, in that day, you got a 10 percent play.

DOUGLASS: Which dinner now?

WATSON: This was the Unruh dinner in '62. Any of these dinners were run this way. You guaranteed, and they would set up 10 percent over your guarantee. If you got under your guarantee, you paid for your guarantee. They would set up for 10 percent over. What you figured was that you had to know, in your own mind, that if you thought you had sold one thousand tickets, that you only guaranteed nine hundred and they were setting up for a thousand. That particular dinner, if I remember correctly, was set up for a thousand, and we served one thousand and four. It just came out absolutely perfect. And I had a reputation--it was just like winning the lottery--but sheer luck is what caused the thing.

Your main problem in those things are the people who have told you that Joe Doakes has a table of ten and this is coming in here. But,

you finally discover that four people are telling you that they are bringing in ten people, and, in reality, all people are talking about the same table. And all of them are taking credit for the same thing. This was at a hundred dollars a crack, which was the top level of what you sold in that day.

DOUGLASS: I heard that one of the dinners which you did was the first hundred-dollars-a-plate dinner to be put on.

WATSON: I am not sure. It seems to me we had those earlier. But, one way or the other, what I do remember about one of those dinners was two tables of ten each, or twenty people, came dressed to the nines, as you would know, for the president of the United States. And somehow in the deal, Joe Cerrell had sold those tables twice. So we had twenty couples in full dress, full dress, to be seated--that was forty people--at twenty places. Angry. Oh, dear God. Just indignant.

And I can tell you people acted as unpleasantly about a hundred dollars or a thousand dollars a plate as they act today about ten thousand. It is fascinating. Let me tell you. Somebody who has paid \$500 for a table will be just as unpleasant as somebody who has paid \$5,000 or \$25,000, depending upon the human

being. Because I can remember Sterling Way saying to me that night, "Now, Madale, just calm down. Take it easy. We will take care of this."

DOUGLASS: What did you do?

WATSON: We juggled. We juggled two or three things of other people who were complimentary or something like that.

DOUGLASS: Or didn't come?

WATSON: Well, on a presidential, you do not have any vacancies. You have security and staff by the dozens, and that you can juggle around.

DOUGLASS: So you can move staff and put in more people?

WATSON: Yes. In other places. But the other tragedy of those things is that somebody who has really volunteered a lot of time and given you manpower hours and energy gets booted clear back here to the backroom, as though there is no equality between the dollar here and energy and time here. Which is a tragedy, in my opinion, in our time.

DOUGLASS: That is the way it is done.

WATSON: Of course, it is. But these people who have a theory about what is produced in the world, who operate on time and energy, do have a point, regardless of the fact that the almighty dollar is what rules things. It is a fascinating

thing. Because you can get an individual who has written a ten-thousand-dollar check and turns out to be an absolute gentleman and a love. And you can get somebody else who wrote a hundred-dollar check, and he is a miserable human being. Just cussed. This is another thing you learn about people. And you have got to be charming, no matter how unreasonable it is.

DOUGLASS: Now those people you finally seated, did they cool down and were they pleasant in the last analysis?

WATSON: Oh, yes. But Sterling Way died of a heart attack. And Fred Hayman got himself out and married some gal, and they made a fortune on the Giorgio perfumes and dresses. And she divorced him, and he is out with another wife. But these two men were absolutely fascinating, in terms of their handling the public.

DOUGLASS: I would think you would be nervous. Was the food what you expected? Let's say the Kennedy dinner.

WATSON: Oh, yes. I never had but one dinner which I got involved with that was an absolute catastrophe. That was in the seventies, and it was the the Sports Arena. It was done under the party and Ethel Narvid was in charge.

We were selling a dinner where Edward Kennedy was the speaker. We had three-thousand-

and-some-odd people, and the dinner was for either twelve dollars or twelve dollars and a half for the people of the party. And it was a Mexican dinner. And we had gone through the whole damn business as to whether we were going to have Boston baked beans and weiners or we were going to have this Mexican dinner. And a luncheon thing that was all served, and it was very nice. It was catered. And would you believe we had either three or four tables that were served food that was not totally defrosted. It was frozen in the center. I have never lived down that mess. To this day, I have been needled about that one. [Laughter] It was just a headache.

DOUGLASS: Well, feeding that many people is a tremendous challenge.

WATSON: That was in 1972. It was a catered thing, and it was ghastly. It was just dreadful. And dear Ethel--I love her--but, I tell you, she just walked away from that. She got herself over with the elite over here.

DOUGLASS: You were working for her?

WATSON: Yes. She was the next finance chairman at that time. That was another interesting deal. I had been elected the treasurer in '71. Mr. [Charles] Manatt was the chair. It took me

about eight months to finally come to the realization that we had two accounts that I knew nothing about. One in Bakersfield and one here in Los Angeles. As treasurer, my name was not on them. I picked this up.

DOUGLASS: This is treasurer of the state . . .

WATSON: Of the state party. I finally picked this up and had the facts and figures on it in the latter part of November, and I went to his Christmas party for the staff and the officers of the party. I met Charles outside, and I said, I am going to hand in my resignation as the treasurer. He said, "What for?" I said, "Because you have no confidence in me." He said, "That is pretty silly." I said, "You have two accounts which you are operating on, and I have not contact with them at all. And as long as you do not have any faith in my ability, I will turn in my resignation." And I looked him right in the eye, "And I also will give Carl Greenberg and Richard Bergholz my reasons for resigning."

DOUGLASS: What did he say?

WATSON: He said, "Now, Madale, that is not necessary." This was at his party for the staff and the officers. Before the month was out, the first of January, that was changed. And this affair was coming up in February of '72, and Ethel

Narvid had already done some fund raisers. And she was good at it. She just didn't want to bother with details. Jules Glazier, who was our accountant, said, "Madale, I am having the devil's own time getting the records straight." I am not saying to you that she is dishonest. Don't misunderstand me. She just didn't bother with the details.

Sure enough, Mr. Manatt called me up one day and said, "Madale, I want you to do the account. I want you to keep track of our work with Ethel." And I knew exactly what it was. I didn't have a leg to stand on for turning it down. I already had done my pitch in December. I said, "Yes. sir." I was an Unruh person. Ethel didn't have much faith in me. On the other hand, she was busy. Her problem was raising money on this thing. So we did two sets of bookkeeping on that particular dinner. The darnest thing that ever happened.

DOUGLASS: My goodness.

WATSON: Well, because she wanted control. Because everybody believes that their financial lists are the most important thing in the world. It is not true anymore with the computer. But it was in that day.

DOUGLASS: You guarded your list?

WATSON: Oh, yes. As a result, we did this a twofold way. But I can tell you that was the awfulest fiasco that night that every happened.

DOUGLASS: This was in the Sports Arena, in '72.

WATSON: Yes.

DOUGLASS: What about the Johnson dinner? That was in the Palladium.

WATSON: That was in the Palladium. There is never a dinner where you don't have a foulup. I can't remember the dinner that I booked the bigwigs on the front row. So we had press. So they had cameras. Wouldn't you know, one of the airplane industries, dead center, front tier, was a table of ten. It was absolutely vacant. There isn't a soul. So, in that case, knowing what your cameras were going to do to you, you take a look over here on your floor plan, and you go back and get the people here that you know they are all comp [complimentary], and you just move them up front. That makes the other people--they know where their money came from, and they know these people don't have a hundred bucks--annoyed. But there is nothing you can do.

DOUGLASS: And you can't pick another group up and move them.

WATSON: And the other thing you learn to do. There are some of the gals who run a tighter ship than I did in that days. But I was able to always say

we did not give out complimentary tickets,
because we sold.

[End Session 2]

[End Tape 5, Side A]

[Session 3, November 2, 1988]

[Begin Tape 5, Side B]

DOUGLASS: Mrs. Watson, let's work through your long experience on the state central committee. I am impressed because you went on in August of 1950, and, except for one little hiatus, you have been on, I suspect, longer than anyone else. And you may still top that record, if you get reappointed.

WATSON: I think there are a couple of delightful ladies that are as gray-haired as I am, in the north half of the state. It is possible that they also have been on the committee as long as I. I do not believe anybody else has. I almost have become part of an institution.

DOUGLASS: You were a state treasurer at this point.
[Laughter] Let's start with that appointment. As I recall, you said in an earlier interview, you were appointed in August of 1950 by James Harvey Brown.

WATSON: James Harvey Brown, who had run for the assembly in the Hollywood area against Charlie Conrad. He had run in 1948, and he also ran in 1950. In

that day, basically, the state party was known as the Democratic State Central Committee, which is known today as the California Democratic Party, and was named by the nominee of the June primary election. Now, some of those people were incumbents and others are just simply running on open races.

DOUGLASS: This was loaded toward the incumbents.

WATSON: This was, basically, all that it was in that day. That, and I think my memory is correct when I say it was also the county chairs [chairmen] of the fifty-eight counties of the state of California. Basically, that became a problem because there are only nine of those counties classified in the south half of the state. The rest of the fifty-eight are in the north half of the state. Actually, in terms of representation, the county chairs carried a great deal of weight in the operation of the Democratic State Central Committee.

But, going back, it was the nominees and their appointees. Depending upon whether they were an incumbent or rather won the election and were finally seated in November, they were allowed a greater number of appointments than were the people who were simply nominees and then the Republican party [candidates] won out in November.

DOUGLASS: Now let me get this straight. If you won the primary, you had the right to name so many people. But if you won in the general election . . .

WATSON: You didn't make your appointments until after November. You knew then who were incumbents, and who were nominees.

DOUGLASS: All right. So they were more proportionally for the incumbents.

WATSON: Actually, at the present time, I cannot remember whether. . . . I don't think, if we go back to the forties, that there was at that time equality, whereby it had to be so many men and so many women. The equality thing did not come up, if my memory serves me correctly, until into the seventies, when we had what is known as the "Great Democratic Reform," which was in the Kansas City convention of December of 1974. That was when we had this alleged great reform.

This is just off the top of my head. I could be wrong on this. It seems to me that the state central committee in that day, in 1950, probably was not more than somewhere between 600 to maybe 750 people in total. And it only met completely in August of the even year, of the year that there was either an election for California governor or the United States president.

DOUGLASS: So you were meeting between the primary and the general election?

WATSON: What you really had was the change of the officer level of the party right between a primary and a general election for electing either the president or the governor of the state of California. These are statewide. What you considered a problem was the fact that if you changed the officer level of the party in August, you frequently had people win out on that who were not in accord with what had been done in a primary campaign. Or people who had been in the positions of influence, the people who they were backing, possibly lost out in the party primary of June. Therefore, they were not terribly enthusiastic as to who the Democratic nominee might be in order to run against what I have always classified as "your loyal opposition" in the November election. So the party was never classified as being terribly strong.

The other problem that you had in that day, which you had clear until you could finally get Governor Brown, Sr. elected, was the fact that you had cross-filing. You had innumerable of your incumbents that were simply reelected in the primary. They cross-filed, and they were elected in the June primary.

Anyway, I was appointed on the state central committee. My first meeting was the full meeting in August of 1950. The full state central committee only met once in two full years in that day. It was years before we ever got any more operation as far as all the state central committee people were concerned at a statewide level.

In fact, once I was on the executive board. The business of the party was run by the executive board, meeting four times a year after you had this one full meeting in August. Actually, even the executive board didn't run things because the bylaws, as far as I can find from the earliest ones that I have (which I think go back to '50 or '48 to now), if you read all of it in its entirety, you discover in reality the state chair really controls the operations of the party. Whether you like it or not, that is the hard, cold fact. That individual, more or less, is responsible for raising funds. As long as he has control of the funds, he or she controls, basically, what is accomplished.

DOUGLASS: First of all, where was this first meeting in August?

WATSON: I am trying to think. I am not sure that I remember. I realize that in our former

conversation, I confused this. I have a very clear recollection of going to a meeting in 1952 in Sacramento. But I really, at this moment, don't remember.

DOUGLASS: The reason why I was wondering was did it rotate? Did it go north, south, middle?

WATSON: To my knowledge, it has always moved, every two years, north and south. This year, the full state committee, in the first week of February of 1989, which will have almost 3,000 members to it, will elect a state chair for a four-year term. I kid the young people for always thinking that things have been forever. In reality, I don't know what happened, if we go back earlier than the thirties. My recollection of what my father told me about the state central committee was that we alternated just in the officer level of the party the same as we do with the assemblymen and the congressmen of the state. They are two-year terms.

DOUGLASS: Whether or not that first meeting you went to was south and the '52 meeting was north, let me ask you a couple of basic questions. Who composed the executive committee?

WATSON: As far as I can remember, it would be the representatives of the congressional districts. The party at the state level, the basic

representation, was, geographically, at the congressional level. In the thirty-eight years that I have been around, we have moved it from congressional level to [state] senatorial level to assembly level. There have been these changes. In that day, the foundation was at the congressional level.

DOUGLASS: That was the building block.

WATSON: That was the building block. I could be wrong, but I think if we go back to the late forties, we certainly didn't have forty-five congressional districts in that day. In fact, I am not sure if we had a total of thirty in that day. So, every ten-year period, we always acquired several more congressmen than we had formerly had in the decade before.

Each congressional district was entitled to cochair, a man and a woman, representing that congressional district. And those people were elected by the activists within the party of the congressional district, which comprised the incumbents and nominees of the party and that geographical territory.

DOUGLASS: Including assembly, congress, and state senate?

WATSON: Yes. The constitutional officers and so forth.

DOUGLASS: Incumbents and nominees.

WATSON: Yes. When you say that, you are talking about everything from the governor right on down. The

county committees--and that is another thing that I never learned until the reapportionment of '61--are elected in three different forms within the fifty-eight counties. In Los Angeles County, the citizenry, the registered Democrats on a primary election, elects seven county committee people for each assembly district that is within the geographical territory of Los Angeles County. But in the north half of the state--I can't give you the divisions, but in some of these areas--they are elected by the supervisorial districts within a county.

DOUGLASS: So many per supervisorial district?

WATSON: That's right. Because, actually, what you have in the north half of the state is that an assembly district or a congressional district can cover four or five or seven counties. The inability to keep this all mathematically straight comes because of the entire difference of structure north of the Tehachapi Mountains and south. We had all the land, the desert and all the area. They developed up north years and decades ahead of us, and their counties are actually small suburban areas compared to what we have got down here. The other thing that is true, I think it was 1927 or something, we did not have, originally, fifty-eight counties. We

had less counties. The whole structure, depending on how we grew, has changed.

DOUGLASS: You have very nicely explained how a cochair is elected. Let's see if we have everybody. There are incumbents, nominees for any elected office who reside in that district, the county committee chairmen.

WATSON: No. The county committeemen, the county committee people.

DOUGLASS: Now, were there any others?

WATSON: Well, I think there were some.

DOUGLASS: Clubs?

WATSON: What I don't remember is whether the club movement came into this within the district prior to the creation of the California Democratic Council of Clubs, which was the product of the first Adlai Stevenson presidential campaign of 1952. That was the product of that. It came into creation in 1953 because there was a tremendous amount of political activists. People who were young, with a lot of enthusiasm, and they simply did not wish to back off and do nothing.

DOUGLASS: All right. Let's go back to this executive committee. It was composed of these cochairs of the congressional districts, and we have gone over how they were elected. Who else was on the executive committee? The officers?

WATSON: The officers are elected by the entire central committee on their meeting, which in that day was in August. The committee as a whole elected their officers, which were chairmen, women's division chair, secretary and treasurer, north, and the same thing south. And I think you just had the eight people, four of the north and four of them south.

DOUGLASS: This brings us to this very interesting question that there really wasn't, in that day, a title called "Democratic state party chairman."

WATSON: No. There certainly was not.

DOUGLASS: There was a gentleman's agreement, apparently?

WATSON: Yes. The weight and the wheeling and dealing, if you want to put it crassly, was either done north or south.

DOUGLASS: On alternate two-year periods?

WATSON: On an alternate two-year period. Yes.

DOUGLASS: So everybody who was in the party just knew that for these two years someone in the south was where it was all happening. Yet, you had these parallel structures.

WATSON: You ran the state absolutely as though it was two independent states. We did this for years. Between that and cross-filing--from the time Hiram Johnson created the cross-filing thing in 1910 to 1912 in order to stop the control of the railroads (the railroads were totally

controlling our government)--this particular situation was such that in reality we were never very strong. They very rapidly operated cross-filing, and you didn't have to state your party affiliation on that. You didn't have to state that until into the fifties. The first thing that happened on the ballot was that when you filed for running for anything, you had to state whether you were a registered Democrat or a registered Republican.

DOUGLASS: Let's take this back. You were a cochair of your congressional district.

WATSON: The Fifteenth Congressional District.

DOUGLASS: In 1950?

WATSON: Yes.

DOUGLASS: So you were then on the executive committee.

WATSON: That then put me on the executive. So rather than just going to the one meeting in August of 1950, then I also attended the other four Democratic State Central Committee executive board meetings of the next two-year period.

DOUGLASS: So you immediately got into the middle of this.

WATSON: That's correct. Because I was a political activist in that day.

DOUGLASS: Out of the years you have been involved with the party, a high percentage of the time you were on the executive committee. Would it be all the time?

- WATSON: The only time that I was not actually on the state central committee, because I actually was not on the state central committee or the executive board from August of the year that Charlie Warren was an assemblyman and he ran for the state chairmanship.
- DOUGLASS: Against Carmen Warschaw. That was '66, I believe. He didn't reappoint you.
- WATSON: I think it was in August of '66. Charlie Warren actually served two years and four months. Because at that time we changed over to the odd years. Then our state party had its full meeting in January of 1969.
- DOUGLASS: There is the switchover date we were looking for.
- WATSON: I had my problems with Charlie on a couple of things.
- DOUGLASS: We have that anecdote. You did describe that you got very angry.
- WATSON: Oh, lord, yes.
- DOUGLASS: What I wanted to know, aside from that hiatus, were you on the executive committee the rest of the time?
- WATSON: Up to the last few years. I actually didn't have a total voting right in the last four years. Maybe six years. I had been appointed to the rules committee. And because I had been appointed to the rules committee, I am notified

then of the executive board meetings, and I attend all of them. As I had no opportunity to get an appointment, there was an actual two-year period when I really was not a member of either the state central committee or on any committee. I was an activist to the extent that I gave volunteer time at the headquarters. So, as a result, I knew [about] and I attended the majority of the executive board meetings of that two-year period also.

DOUGLASS: Can one do that?

WATSON: Oh, yes. They are open to the public.

DOUGLASS: So you didn't lose your rhythm.

WATSON: The continuity. And what was involved. But that two-year period, I was not a state-committee person, I was not on the executive board, and I was not on a standing committee. When I am kidded about being there forever, in reality, I had no voting right for a two-year period.

DOUGLASS: I understand that. I think the other side that is very important is that, for all these years, you have attended the executive committee meetings, and you have, for most of them, had a vote. You had a very regularized basis to be informed on what was going on in the party.

WATSON: Knowing what was going on. Because, as I say, they are open to the public, and I simply

continued to go to them.

DOUGLASS: Let's go back, again, a moment. Why were you elected cochair of your Fifteenth Congressional District, which really put you on the committee to begin with?

WATSON: Because I was an activist within the party proper in the Fifteenth Congressional District, which is the district I have lived in since 1936.

DOUGLASS: So this was the culmination of a lot of political activity and working on campaigns. And who was your cochair? The man.

WATSON: In the beginning, it was Jesse Unruh.

DOUGLASS: But not in 1950, was it?

WATSON: In all honesty, I don't know who was the cochair.

DOUGLASS: Wasn't it more like '52 that he was the cochair?

WATSON: In '52, I carried it because I ran for the assembly. In 1952, I was a nominee, so that gave me an impetus.

DOUGLASS: All right. I think we have clarified, I hope, some of this confusion. We have clarified that there really wasn't somebody called the "state chairman."

WATSON: Not officially.

DOUGLASS: Not in the title. That this rotated back and forth. Can you remember that first year? What

is your recollection of what that was like to be part of the state committee's activities? Did you like it? Were you excited by it?

WATSON: Yes. I enjoyed it. I can tell you hardly anything about what was done. I realize that time gets away from you, and you really don't remember things. I was active in the women's division, which, in that day, had monthly meetings of just the women of the county. Not just the county. Southern California. On some occasions, the ladies from San Diego [County], Orange County, San Bernardino and Riverside Counties came.

DOUGLASS: Where did you usually meet?

WATSON: My earliest recollection of where we met was in a room that was like a conference room that handled a goodly number of people in the Subway Terminal Building, which is at Fourth [Street] and Hill Street in downtown Los Angeles. That room had a whole kitchen, both a kitchen and bathroom facilities. The women's division had monthly meetings, and I found myself very rapidly, just like I was in PTA in the forties, being involved as a tea chairman. Between [] Kay Martell, who was out of San Fernando Valley and couple of others, we were always making the sandwiches and the teacakes and so forth for the dear souls who always came. It seems to me,

originally, we made the sandwiches and the teacakes, and then it got to the place where you were suppose to be bringing your own sandwich, like many of these volunteer organizations. And dessert and coffee were brought in on a volunteer basis for everybody. That kind of thing.

DOUGLASS: What was the difference in the feeling, though, of being on a truly statewide committee as contrasted to the local activities? Obviously, locally, you had a lot more involvement and time you spent with the women's division.

WATSON: Basically, at the local level, you simply had your monthly meetings of your Fifteenth Congressional District committee meeting, which involved predominantly men. And the women were not in predominance in that kind of a situation.

DOUGLASS: So, in your congressional district, as a cochair, you had a meeting a month. Then you went to the women's division meeting once a month.

WATSON: Which was during the daytime. That's right. At that particular time, I was interested in school board campaigns in the city of Los Angeles, because my problem was that I was not always in accord with exactly what the school system was teaching.

DOUGLASS: You have described working in those, but, of course, those, technically, are nonpartisan. You were just generally active.

Out of the fifties, because it was different then, we could go over a few names of the people who were southern chair, which was equivalent to chair, and talk about their styles. We went over Elizabeth Snyder in quite a bit of detail. You talked about her in another interview. Let's just dwell on that period a moment because you said that simultaneously three prominent women were involved, and you were going to double check the names. Maybe you could speak to that.

WATSON: Yes. One of them was Diane McGinnis from San Diego County. It seems to me that she was the southern chair of the women's division. For the life of me, I am confused right now as to who the third person was.

DOUGLASS: Was one a national committeewoman?

WATSON: I am not sure. I have to go back and find what records I've got of the fifties in order to be able to tell you. In this same time, you have the rise of the activists and the creation of the California Democratic Council of Clubs, which came as a result of the 1952 election. You have the building of a club movement in the state of California, which, beyond the shadow of

a doubt, was the greatest club movement in all of this century. This was, basically, created, its original meeting was at Asilomar. I was not to the original meeting. The impetus of it was from, truly, the north half of the state.

Simultaneously with this or shortly after, as it began to build, you had the creation of this organization called Dime a Day for Democracy, which was created and implemented by state committee people from the south. The Los Angeles County central committee bought in, and their philosophies and their attitude was that the council of clubs was the answer to true citizenry participation in political activities. And, so, in Los Angeles County, you had the county committee in sympathy with the north. And, yet, you had the rest of the outfit involved simply at the state committee level.

You get to '54, '56, I guess it is, when Elizabeth has become the southern chair. In that instance, you have a difference of opinion between the people north, but, basically, you have the difference of opinion between Elizabeth Snyder and the people backing her and Paul Ziffren, who wanted the job at that time and didn't get it. And Paul Ziffren, from my viewpoint, bought in with George Miller and Alan

WATSON: Cranston. I am trying to think when Alan got around finally to running for controller-- it was 1958--because that was one of the things that was involved. You had Alan Cranston, who had some ambitions in terms of running for a statewide, constitutional office.

My activities in that day, after I had done my homework and had also done my good-for-the-party deal in '52, was also the fact that I bought in and I was impressed with that freshman assemblyman from 1954, one Jesse Unruh. I became part and parcel of the activists for the rest of the fifties, of what Mr. Unruh was interested in doing. Because, in that day, the Fifteenth Congressional District was comprised of four assembly districts. It was the Sixty-fifth, which was Unruh's assembly district, and the Sixty-third, which was the late [Assemblyman] Don [A.] Allen's [Sr.] district, and the Fifty-eighth, which was Republican and had been Waters' district and then became [Assemblyman Joseph C.] Joe Shell's, and the Hollywood area which was Charlie Conrad. So, in the fifties, you had four assembly districts making up the Fifteenth Congressional District. By that time they had put together the Asilomar thing, and they finally decided to have a

statewide operation on the California [Democratic] Council of Clubs, which I thought was in the tail end of '53. I may be wrong on my dates, but it seems to me that it was that.

DOUGLASS: It was November of '53.

WATSON: As an activist within the Fifteenth Congressional [District], in that area I then was elected within the Fifteenth Congressional District to be Council of Clubs director. Simultaneously, I was also the cochair of the state committee unit in that district. As I told you, Susie Clifton over here in the San Gabriel Valley, and John Gaffney out in the heart of the San Gabriel Valley, the three of us were the only ones out of the south who were both a state central committee cochair and a director of the CDC, representing the Twenty-fifth, the Nineteenth, and the Fifteenth Congressional Districts. And two of those were Republican, and one was Democratic. That was where we started, if we go back into that area.

But, in terms of the problems within the party proper, my recollection of the things that made me so indignant were the conduct of the men, who did not lose graciously. They were poor losers, from my viewpoint, and they were going to have it their way or else. So they

made Mrs. Snyder's life miserable, just miserable.

DOUGLASS: You mean, the men who were contesting it?

WATSON: Yes. Or, after she got it and had a two-year period, they did nothing, as far as I could see, to cooperate with her.

DOUGLASS: They didn't exactly help her out?

WATSON: No, not a particle. At that time, I was young, idealistic, fairly naive, and I was very, very indignant at the unfairness of what I thought was going on. This was then during that two-year period when we created--over and beyond the fact that you had only one meeting in twenty-four months of the full state committee, then you had the executive board--a steering committee. In that day, it was only nineteen members.

DOUGLASS: We talked about this in another interview, but was that actually created during the time Elizabeth Snyder was the chair?

WATSON: That's right. That is exactly right.

DOUGLASS: Was that created over her dead body, so to speak?

WATSON: It was created in order to circumvent [the chair], from my viewpoint, because I am sure you are going to get other versions. It seems to me that, my recollection is such, it was a fascinating thing. You would have an executive

board meeting on a Saturday afternoon and Sunday. Then you would have these nineteen people meet after that was over. They would literally circumvent or simply cancel out those things the executive board had voted upon at their meeting.

DOUGLASS: Let me probe this a little more. Was this a creation to circumvent Elizabeth Snyder's regime? Or was this a general kind of a way to circumvent the state committee? In other words, was the idea a direct result of Elizabeth Snyder being elected?

WATSON: And the people who backed her. Yes.

DOUGLASS: This was a manifestation of the resentment of the people who didn't win?

WATSON: From my viewpoint, this was a manifestation of Paul Ziffren and the group that backed him of buying in with the boys from the north half of the state and having control of what would control the party. That is the way I saw it.

DOUGLASS: How was that set up? Would this have been passed by the executive board of the state committee, or did it have to be passed by the whole central committee to put such a thing in place?

WATSON: It would have been just as I told you. The only thing that ran the party, even as today the

only thing that really runs the party is the executive board.

DOUGLASS: So they got the executive board to approve of the steering committee.

WATSON: That's right.

DOUGLASS: The executive board would appoint the steering committee?

WATSON: I don't remember. I would have to go back and hunt the bylaws of that day.

DOUGLASS: As I recall, you described these as the behind-the-scenes people who raised the money, who had the money. That type of person.

WATSON: You must remember, again, we were not very strong because, fundamentally, the cross-filing thing allowed the legislature. . . . The legislature only met, what, two months of one year, and six months of another year. And they got paid all of \$300 a month or something of the sort. This was kind of like what you consider today volunteer work. That was the way the government was really operated.

The Republicans were in office, plus the fact that they had an outside organization. In fact, they had two of them that worked well. They don't work as well today. Then they had what was known as the Republican Assembly. That had nothing to do with the Republican assemblymen. The Republican Assembly was an

outside organization, just the same as the Republican Federated Women's Club was an outside organization for party organization and fund raising. It was good. Excellent.

DOUGLASS: During this time we are speaking of--and I did ask you about this before, but I want to come back to it once again--Elizabeth Snyder was very much pushing Dime a Day for Democracy. Were you aware of that being a problem at all in southern California in terms of how energies were being expended? They lost, basically, on that concept?

WATSON: You could not really sell it. It didn't go over because the Council of Clubs appealed to people. The original Council of Clubs appealed to people who also Adlai Stevenson appealed to. Which, in reality, was, I guess you can say, the cream of the crop of political activists. They were alleged idealists. Whereas, you know, labor had a number of problems of its own in that day. Then it was a deal of, "Well, should organized labor come in and take control of the party?" Or, should, in reality, the "people," the grass roots. The word has been so used that it is just dreadful.

DOUGLASS: So you are equating labor with what Dime a Day for Democracy would have appealed to? That is, grass roots, less elitist approach.

WATSON: No. Labor would just come in, from my remembrance of it, and just decide that absolutely they had the answers. They represented the working people, and, therefore, why shouldn't they run things.

DOUGLASS: What I am really trying to find out is why the Dime a Day for Democracy concept didn't compete. As I gather, the CDC concept won out. Dime a Day for Democracy failed.

WATSON: As far as Los Angeles County was concerned, the organizational ability of the Council of Clubs took hold within the Los Angeles County committee people. I am trying to think now whether it was the fifties or the sixties, that is the only era that the Los Angeles County committee was truly an organization that both functioned in organizational work within the districts and could also fund raise.

Right this minute, I can't give you which decade it is that it had an executive secretary, a paid staffperson, and it had four or five field people that went out into the assembly districts of this county and worked on the development of club structure of rank-and-file citizens. At one time, it had over 300 chartered Democratic clubs of Los Angeles County. Today, if they have a hundred, they

think they have done a remarkable job.

DOUGLASS: These were county-chartered clubs. These were not CDC clubs.

WATSON: That's right. They rapidly became synonymous in various areas. Except under the CDC, they could affiliate with the CDC without ever being chartered. This was also one of the battles going into the sixties was the chartering. Today, the Council of Clubs, which still exists, their clubs must charter with county committees throughout the state.

DOUGLASS: But the obverse would be true. In these days, we are talking about if you were a county-chartered committee, you could affiliate with CDC, if you chose to.

WATSON: Oh, yes. But you could also belong to CDC without ever affiliating with the county. And you were autonomous, and you could be irresponsible, and there was no one who disciplined you.

DOUGLASS: In a given locality, you could have two clubs. One, a CDC club and, one, a county-chartered club, working over the same area?

WATSON: That's correct. Not only that, you could have one of them working for one Democrat, and one working for another Democrat. Both of them telling the public that they represented the Democratic party.

DOUGLASS: Very confusing.

WATSON: And on top of that, you could have a club, a Democratic club, that backed an individual that was actually a registered Republican that was on a primary ballot. Now that is utter confusion.

DOUGLASS: Because of cross-filing.

WATSON: And those kinds of things did happen. And the public never understood. This is why this state, as far as I can tell, this [thinking] has always been predominant in this state, "Oh, you know, party does not matter to me. I vote for the man." You may never have any understanding of what the man stands for. And when you argue with these people, you get the other problem which says, "Well, the platform of the party means nothing. It is plumb full of loopholes and is watered down."

[End Tape 5, Side B]

[Begin Tape 6, Side A]

WATSON: I have always promoted the fact that a party platform has to be open enough that it will appeal to all registered Democrats. Therefore, it cannot have tunnel vision. It cannot be just hardnosed about anything. And, for my book, a party platform needs to be equally as lenient, if that is the way you want to put it, but, anyway, as open as the Bible is. And the Bible is quoted by everything from good Catholicism right to the Jehovah's Witnesses, the Mormons, and the Christian Scientists. And, yet, look at the difference of how those human beings approach living.

I have spent years trying to convince the idealistic young person or the adamant conformist that you have to have the platform open enough that it appeals to all types of human beings that go out and register as Democrats. Then what you have, when somebody is disillusioned, is "what good is a party platform? It does not mean anything. It is all watered down. It really does not understand any issues. Therefore, I will have what the man says." Well, my theory is that the platform is truly a set of guidelines. As a whole, we do stand for some things that are different than the Republican party does. Sometimes, it is a

little hard to see how much difference there is.
[Laughter]

DOUGLASS: Well, going past Elizabeth Snyder, the name of Judge Rosenthal was mentioned. I think we thought he was chairman from '56 to '58. Was he from northern California?

WATSON: No. He was southern.

DOUGLASS: The years must be a little off then. It might have been '58-'60, because it would have gone north after Snyder.

WATSON: So he would have been the southern chair. I may be wrong, but it seems to me that Roger Kent was probably the northern chair at that time. Roger Kent was the chair at any number of times.

DOUGLASS: Yes. So from '56 on, Roger Kent was on the scene. Well, any comments about Judge Rosenthal?

WATSON: As far as I was concerned, I got along with Bill Rosenthal very well. He was an assemblyman, and he was made a judge by Edmund Brown, Sr.

DOUGLASS: [Referring to notes] William H. Rosenthal, Democrat, Los Angeles, elected in 1943 and served to '52. Does that make sense?

WATSON: I thought he went from the assembly to the judgeship, as an appointment of Brown. He was the chairman of the south after Elizabeth Snyder.

- DOUGLASS: So, if we skip that two years, that would make him chairman from '58 to '60, because she was '54 to '56.
- WATSON: I can't remember who all those people were.
- DOUGLASS: Roger Kent was north. It would have been north.
- WATSON: Oh, yes. Roger Kent was north.
- DOUGLASS: Well, anyway, back to Rosenthal.
- WATSON: There were Jane Morrison, Clara Shirpser, and Eleanor Fowler, and all of these women who I can't quite remember where they all belong in the thing.
- DOUGLASS: Perhaps one way to approach these first ten years is this. When you were there, from '50 to '60, did you tend to always go to one standing committee you liked to serve on? Or were you on a variety of standing committees of the executive committee?
- WATSON: Basically, my recollection is that the only thing I ever served on was the Rules Committee. I have been sitting on the Rules Committee for years.
- DOUGLASS: Did you start out in the early fifties on the Rules Committee?
- WATSON: Yes. In the beginning I was just assigned. Whoever was the chair thought that this would be a good idea. Lord, in the last twenty years, I have just simply said to the boys, "This is what I'd like to do." I am perfectly aware that,

really, in the process of change, everybody who comes in brand new wants to change it totally. All of it, right then and there. The people who are the head of it don't want anything changed at all, if it is working to their convenience. Therefore, you need, somewhere along the way, something that has some line of continuity, in terms of whether you do have change or not. Change has to come. Because of both economy and the amount of people and how many people you have with their ideas, you do have to have change. But you don't either throw it all out in a hurry or dig in your heels and do nothing. It rather appealed to me. In the last twenty years, I have just asked point blank to remain on the committee.

I did a great deal within the work of the women's division, if we go back to the forties and fifties. Invariably, I ended up basically in two areas. Either in this tea thing, which was always so essential to have done whether it ever made any sense to me. This was the kind of a thing that women were expected to do. In the sixties, it was the legislative side of it that interested me. By this time I was fascinated with how the legislature functioned.

DOUGLASS: You did mention that you liked being legislative chairman as part of the women's division.

WATSON: That was after we changed, and we had equality for the women. I am talking about earlier in the fifties. I had been to Sacramento a time or two. I can't really remember why I was in Sacramento in 1959, but I watched Jesse Unruh as the Ways and Means chairman. I suppose it was my activity within the Kennedy campaign that had created my interest in government proper.

But the function of how a piece of legislation is created, and what has to be done, in terms of finally trying to get it into law, absolutely fascinated me. You must remember in that day you typed things out on a standard typewriter. It was not an electric typewriter, for heaven's sake. You had to roll things out on a mimeograph machine by hand, which was sometimes just handcranked. It wasn't even electric, let alone being totally automatic. There was a lot of physical work. It was not much different than the PTA and the other community organizations that I had been in for years. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: Let's go on a bit. Charles Manatt was the chair from '71 to '73, and that coincides with the year you were elected treasurer. I think we have the story about how you went to Mr. Unruh and asked for his support and how you went about

doing this, although we might get a little more detail about how tough it was. You said Unruh's people worked the floor for you on that. Wasn't that a matter of getting the nomination? Was it actually contested on the floor? In other words, do two nominees contest, or is it a matter being named the nominee?

WATSON: No. It was a contested thing.

DOUGLASS: Who were you running against?

WATSON: [Laughter] I will think of it later. Well, he was a banking lawyer in Beverly Hills that State Senator Tommy Rees backed.

DOUGLASS: Maybe it is in there. I remember your mentioning that Rees did back this person.

WATSON: The man did not do much about this until like two weeks before. But when we got to the hotel and the floor of the convention, the story was that the job was so detailed. There was the proposed legislation that was going to require political reporting. This was detailed. It dealt with a great deal of money. In reality, you needed a man versed in both law and accounting. My argument was that there was nobody that understood just basic arithmetic any better than a housewife who was given by her husband just so much money to run a household. And by the time you got through with the grocery store and the dry goods store and paid the taxes

and the automobile insurance and the house payment, you certainly understood the value of a dollar. That is exactly what I pitched this thing on.

DOUGLASS: How did you pitch it? Did you pitch in some handouts or letters?

WATSON: I thought that I had a resume.

DOUGLASS: Like a one-sheet [resume]?

WATSON: Something of that sort.

DOUGLASS: Did you mail it ahead?

WATSON: No.

DOUGLASS: You did it at the meeting.

WATSON: On the floor.

DOUGLASS: Now this was January of '71. Where were you meeting?

WATSON: In Sacramento. Up to now the law requires our official state committee to meet biannually in Sacramento.

DOUGLASS: That didn't come until the sixties, did it?

WATSON: No. That was true in the fifties and the sixties and seventies. It has been only the last two years ago that you could have a full state committee [meeting] outside of Sacramento.

DOUGLASS: Wouldn't that answer the question we were puzzling about? Your first meeting in August of 1950.

WATSON: It had to be in Sacramento. Not only did it have to be then, but in that day the Republican

party, the Communist party, and the Independent-Progressive party--all of them--had to meet on the same day, the same Saturday, in Sacramento.

DOUGLASS: The 1950 and '52 meetings we were talking about were both in Sacramento.

WATSON: Yes. As far as full meetings are concerned. The other thing that happened in 1971 was the fact that Jesse Unruh, the speaker of the assembly, had said that he was for me.

DOUGLASS: Publicly.

WATSON: And he made the nominating speech.

DOUGLASS: So how tight was the vote?

WATSON: It was not particularly a close vote. The only real problem that I had on a vote was we went to a second ballot on the vice chairmanship in '79. I had a second ballot on that one, I think.

DOUGLASS: That put you in as treasurer with two interesting people. First of all, Charles Manatt. Then John [L.] Burton and then Manatt again.

WATSON: You have to remember, again.

DOUGLASS: Didn't you run for three terms?

WATSON: Yes. But in '73, Charles Manatt was the southern chair. Charles Manatt was the state chair, '71 through '73. He was the southern chair, '73 through '75. He was the state chair,

'75 to '77. What happened as far as the money was concerned, Mr. Burton ran an independent treasury deal.

DOUGLASS: He was state chair.

WATSON: He was state chair. He ran his office out of Los Angeles. He had an executive secretary here. But as far as political reporting was concerned, the state chair had an I.D. [identification number] for their account, and they made their own, independent report.

DOUGLASS: Is this true of Burton or of Manatt, too?

WATSON: I am trying to think of which year it was that Mannatt was the state chair and M. Larry Lawrence was the southern chair. I can't remember now whether it was in '71 or '75.

DOUGLASS: I have Bruce Corwin as the southern chair in 1975.

WATSON: Corwin was the southern chair from '77 to '79.

DOUGLASS: How about Burt Coffey?

WATSON: Burt Coffey was the state chair. But, anyway, what happened in terms of when Manatt was the state chair, which was '71 to '73 and '75 to '77, he caused the southern chair, which in one of those two-year periods was Larry Lawrence from South Pasadena. . . . Well, it was one year that Larry Lawrence was it and the other year that O'Neill was the southern chair and ran his operation out of Orange County.

Larry Lawrence's deal must have been '71-'73 because what did happen was the fact that the southern chair had to give all of his reporting on money. It came under the same I.D. number. The southern chair and the state chair, it ran simultaneously. But the year that Johnny Burton was there, where I was still the treasurer for the southern half of the state, I was aware of money being used that I sure wondered about.

I can remember talking to Peter Kelly, who was the executive secretary for Mr. Manatt. Peter said, "Madale, you don't want to be involved in that. You don't want to sign those things." And I said, "Why?" And he just smiled and he said, "You just don't want to do that. I am just telling you, Mother." [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: Friendly advice?

WATSON: Yes. As time went on, I realized--because somewhere in my possessions I have some reporting out of that, or copies of it, rather--in reality, we were raising funds in the state, and it was being moved to elect congressmen in other states. This was a game deal that Burton had done which was really being done under what, in the vernacular, was classified as "The Burton Machine."

DOUGLASS: Yes. We should back up a minute and clarify something, which I think you clarified for me in an earlier conversation. By this time, or at least by the late sixties or the mid-sixties, we now have what is really a state chairman. It isn't just dependent on being a southern or a northern chair.

WATSON: Well, that came up in the middle sixties. That is correct.

DOUGLASS: I want to be sure that we've got this in the record.

WATSON: The bylaws and the rules of the party changed in the latter part of the sixties. As far as I can remember, you had a state chair and a vice chair, being of opposite sex.

DOUGLASS: Statewide.

WATSON: Statewide. Then you had a northern chair and a southern chair, both men and women, and a secretary and a treasurer. You had ten people instead of eight.

DOUGLASS: Then later you get into a vice chair under the chairs, too, don't you?

WATSON: Later you get rid of the women's division. And then you get to the place where you have just a state chair and vice chair. And they must be of the opposite sex.

DOUGLASS: OK. At this point, though, we are talking about

Manatt and Burton, during the time when you were treasurer. Then there was a statewide chair. There was a vice chair?

WATSON: No. There was a women's division chair.

DOUGLASS: There is still the women's division. That hasn't changed. And there was the treasurer.

WATSON: You have to remember that when Manatt, in '71 and in '73, was the state chair, the women's vice chair was in the north half of the state.

DOUGLASS: You bring up an interesting question, though. You are the treasurer for the whole state committee, but this chair moves to the north.

WATSON: Yes, but you kept different accounts. You had different accounts. The north kept their money separate, and they ran it separately. I don't know how other people did it, but under Manatt, on the two terms I served with him, the southern. . . . No, that isn't true. I believe O'Neill ran his accounting independently, and he ran it out of Orange County. You have to remember when Manatt was the state chair, I think my history is right, that the southern chair was out of either San Diego County or out of Orange County.

DOUGLASS: You mean just by happenstance. O'Neill.

WATSON: Yes. Because the people elected turned out to be O'Neill and Larry Lawrence, from San Diego. He owns the Coronado Hotel. He is one of the

400 most well-to-do people in the United States. Sure enough, both Mr. O'Neill and his sister and Mr. Lawrence are listed within the 400 most well-to-do men in the country.

DOUGLASS: Let me get this straight. Lawrence was southern chair when Manatt was first chairman and you were first treasurer.

WATSON: That's correct.

DOUGLASS: And when Burton was state chairman?

WATSON: Manatt was the southern chair.

DOUGLASS: Right, of course. Then it came south again, and you had Manatt, and O'Neill as the southern chair. It seems to be me that is very confusing for a treasurer?

WATSON: Oh, it is. I think that Mr. Burton ran the northern chair. I am trying to think when Mary Wagner was the chair up north. The women's setup. The costs were simply run through the state chair. Therefore, Mr. Manatt ran an independent southern operation and did not have to report. He ran it independently, and he spent it independently.

DOUGLASS: When he was southern vice chair?

WATSON: That's correct.

DOUGLASS: It is like a confederacy.

WATSON: That's right. I keep telling you that trying to understand the Democratic party in the state of

California is ~~like~~ trying to deal with two independent states. And it has been this way for years!

DOUGLASS: Let's talk about these six years you were treasurer. What are some of the positive things that came out of that, as you look back? What do you feel good about?

WATSON: [Laughter] Well, the thing that I really feel good about is that I don't think it should ever be on the record.

DOUGLASS: You can seal it.

WATSON: I would have to. Because my real problem was trying to keep part of these boys somewhat honest. One of the interesting things was the interesting situation that the executive secretary had in his reporting to his boss. Peter would tell Charles Manatt certain things, and then we would come into a meeting seventy-two hours later, because I would go to Jules Glazier, who was the accountant who did the actual accounting, and I would get a record. And I would ask all the questions that needed to be asked. Then we would go into a meeting, and I would give Mr. Manatt an entirely different set of figures than what Peter had given him seventy-two hours earlier.

And, finally, in one of these episodes, I can't remember which campaign we were involved

with, Charles Manatt was just at the end of his patience. He said, "I just don't understand the discrepancy in this. How can it change that radically in seventy-two hours?" I was aware that it wasn't what Mr. Manatt wanted to know. So Peter had softpedaled and eased off and not tied down things.

I am positive that I had no real effect on Charles Manatt at any time. Because I understood thoroughly that things were run totally by men. They were not totally as time went along in that decade, because you got involved with some women who were well-to-do. They either had connections where they could get larger contributions, or they would put in money in their own right.

I did not have an economic background. I had only an ability to deal with that which was called "grass-rooters," the volunteers. That kind of thing. I was perfectly willing to go out and give a rabbleroising speech as to why we needed to have things done, and why it was the absolute responsibility of all of us to do things for the party, for good government. This kind of thing I could do and I do quite well. I was perfectly willing to do physical, hard work. I would come in and work with volunteers or with

the staff. Practically almost the whole history of the Democratic party is that it is understaffed as far as physical work is concerned.

DOUGLASS: But to go back to this. Here you were, for six years you were treasurer. You had a responsibility you felt you had to live up to. Wouldn't the facts, as you presented them, have to be faced, in terms of the financing? It was your duty to come in independently and present this information. And it is very natural for staff, as you say, to shield the harsh realities. I would have thought that they would have had to at least pay attention to your reporting of what the financial situation was.

WATSON: That's correct. I thought I told you sometime that in the tail of '71, it was a good six months after I had been the treasurer that I was informed by the accountant that there were two bank accounts that I had no connection with. And I confronted Mr. Manatt at his Christmas party--I was his guest--when I began to become officious. I proceeded to tell him that he apparently had no faith in me, that I should hand in a resignation and get out of the whole mess. My problem was that I looked at him and said this quite quietly, "And, of course, I will state my reasons and send the letter to Carl

Greenberg."

DOUGLASS: Who was Carl Greenberg?

WATSON: Carl Greenberg was the political commentator for the Los Angeles Times. [Laughter] And I can tell you it only took a very short time that I was informed about these two accounts. It made no difference with what was being done with them.

DOUGLASS: At least you knew.

WATSON: I knew. I had been signing things, and I had no background on them. I had to believe that Manatt didn't want to go to jail. I had to believe that Peter Kelly was doing what he thought was at least mostly honest. And I had to have faith, absolutely, in Jules Glazier at being honest in terms of reporting.

DOUGLASS: Is the point of what you are saying that you weren't in a socio-economic position to do much more than report the facts?

WATSON: That's exactly right.

DOUGLASS: You couldn't just say, "I think there is something very wrong with this policy."

WATSON: That is correct. When I absolutely did voice my opinion, I have no illusions. This is why I sometimes think this whole thing is nonsense. I don't think it had any effect on the men who wanted to do exactly what they wanted to do.

DOUGLASS: That says a thousand things.

WATSON: Maybe it does. All I can tell you is that I was used. From my viewpoint, Mr. Manatt, Mr. Kelly used me when it was convenient in the same fashion that I believed Mr. Unruh used me. The only difference is that I believe that I knew at all times when I was being used. I was totally aware of it. In each instance, when it came to something that I simply did not believe in, I think the same thing was true in terms of the state committee's bills and payments. There were things I refused to sign. That didn't stop them from being done. Because you had to have two out of four signatures.

DOUGLASS: And the treasurer didn't have to be one. It could be the chairman. You didn't have to sign?

WATSON: You didn't have absolutely to have my signature. It was a case of two out of, I think in the state party, four signatures.

DOUGLASS: Any two?

WATSON: Any two could be it. In terms of Mr. Unruh's situation, and this was only in the very tail end of his operation, but there were two checks that I simply. . . . You just have to have an alternate. Suppose you drop dead. In this case, I was a single signator as far as his political accounts were concerned. But there was always an alternative. Because, in reality,

I was never the true treasurer. Only clear back in the very beginning of Mr. Unruh's background--in fact, I came across some of these things last night that I tore up--where I actually was the treasurer of a committee. But even then you had to have an alternate.

But, in that instance, there were two checks in the Unruh setup that I disagreed with. I made no issue of it. I simply sent it out to the other individual, and he had to sign them.

And in the party thing, I had a difference of opinion with Peter on a couple or three things over the years. I simply said, "I understand that it will make no difference. Mr. Manatt will do what he wants to do, but I will not sign it." I never raised a stink about it. Nor did I make any great issue of it.

The only area that I think that I was of some value [to] Mr. Manatt was at an executive board meeting when we had the young men of the rural caucus within the party. The subcommittees were called caucuses. The rural caucus and the women's caucus, at that stage of the game, were determined to get a commitment out of Mr. Manatt for a given sum of money in terms of an election. It seems to me it was in the [President Jimmy] Carter senate, but I could be wrong. They were determined to have a

WATSON: commitment from this man of a specific sum of money. They had literally backed him to a wall and were just shouting at him.

I stepped into this melee. I finally looked at these couple of women and this one young man, and I said, "You are being absolutely ridiculous. You are asking the man for something he is incapable of giving you a statement on. He has told you over and again that he will do the best he can. He is not able to give you a sum of money, because, let me tell you kids, if we do not have it in the bank account, by God, he cannot tell you that you can have it. And I can tell you as treasurer of the party, we simply do not have the money. As a result, you can't get blood out of turnip, and I would suggest that you stop shouting."

Now, there were a couple of other times that I would get up in a meeting and make a report, and when I did, I only reported the good things. But I reported every month. I came with copies, and anybody who wanted a copy of the report could have it.

DOUGLASS: That is an interesting point. Did you have a meeting of the officers? Let's say, Manatt, you, and Peter Kelly.

WATSON: Yes. You would have them. They always do this.

They still do today. You would have an officer's meeting prior to an executive board meeting.

DOUGLASS: But they met quarterly. You probably met more often.

WATSON: Not necessarily. Not very often. On occasion you did, but not too often.

DOUGLASS: How many hours did you, a day or a week, whatever, spend on this, do you suppose?

WATSON: [Laughter] I don't have any idea. How do you know? That is like asking somebody who is very active in the dear PTA, "How much time do you give?"

DOUGLASS: During those years, was this where you put most of your energy?

WATSON: I gave a lot of time. Along, simultaneous with all of this, I handled the bookkeeping of the Friends of Jesse Unruh Committee, too.

DOUGLASS: You were kneedeep in CPAs [Certified Public Accountants] and accountants.

WATSON: Oh, yes. On the state committee you had auditors come in periodically. Those always just left me in an absolute tizzy. Mary Ellen [Padilla] would say to me, "Madale, I don't know why in the world you get worked up? You have everything down. You may not have it done to the satisfaction of a CPA, but you have it in elementary accounting. And why do you worry?"

DOUGLASS: You were always worried?

WATSON: Well, mainly because we had an audit from general services of the federal government.

DOUGLASS: An Internal Revenue Service audit?

WATSON: No it was general services. GAO.

DOUGLASS: General Accounting Office.

WATSON: Yes. General Accounting. And those two accountants fiddled around for eight solid months.

DOUGLASS: Why?

WATSON: Well, what happened on that was in one of these audits, we had been in a habit of putting out a newspaper. Some years it would be monthly in the party. Some years, depending upon how affluent we were, it would be every other month. Sometimes it would come out every six months. On election years, you ran a slate mailer in it, stating endorsements.

These auditors from General Accounting took a look at this, and they said that we had corporate funds in the housekeeping account. Because you took money from contributions to pay people. You also took it from companies. This was corporate money then that was going into the campaign of a congressmen. It was an October issue, if I remember correctly. I have to have that someplace, too. Anyway, they decided that

out of this four- or eight-page newspaper for the party we mailed out to members of the party and the state committee and so forth that like one-seventeenth was to the advantage of a congressman.

My reaction was that this was a criteria that we had been doing right down through the ages from 1959. These gentlemen would look at me and say, "Yes, Mrs. Watson, we understand that. We understand it, but it does not appear to be legal." The other story was: "All we can do is report. And if the General Accounting believes that this is incorrect, it is turned over to the justice department." Well, if it is turned over to the justice department, then you've got yourself a problem with the law.

For eight solid months I stewed and fretted about this, with both Mr. Kelly and Mr. Manatt telling me that I didn't need to really worry. It would be their responsibility. It would not be mine. I will never really know, knowing what government is like, whether it would or would not be. By the end of eight months, they finally decided that it was perfectly all right.

DOUGLASS: Did they say you could keep doing that?

WATSON: No.

DOUGLASS: They said, "Don't do it in the future."

WATSON: Don't do it in the future.

DOUGLASS: But they must have come up with some fantastic formula to figure it out.

WATSON: I have no idea. I only know at the end of eight months finally that, no, we would not be turned over to the justice department.

DOUGLASS: But, surely, the Republican party would be running into this, too.

WATSON: I don't doubt that.

DOUGLASS: So that was a nervewracking experience.

WATSON: Because the other thing that happened to me that I was not prepared for was I came home from Sacramento in 1971 and was the new treasurer of the California Democratic party. So Monday morning's paper said, in either Greenberg or Bergholz's column, and I can tell you by two o'clock on Monday afternoon that the telephones began to ring in terms of creditors to the Democratic party, we had about a \$42,000 deficit. This thing had been left by Mr. Leon Cooper, the southern chair.

DOUGLASS: In '69-'71.

WATSON: Yes.

DOUGLASS: Leon Cooper. And who was your predecessor as treasurer?

WATSON: I don't know.

DOUGLASS: All right. These were debts left from . . .

WATSON: From Mr. Cooper's operation. Because in Mr.

Cooper's operation, we had had to close the Democratic headquarters. We didn't have a headquarters for a few months. The furniture was all packed up and it was absolutely closed. So when everybody gets panicked along the way, since that time and now, "Well, you have to have this." I look at them and say, "You know, you can close your doors." They look at me and say, "Why, you're crazy." And I say, "No, I am not. There is a precedent for it. It has happened." [Laughter] It is that kind of thing, I guess, that really ends up with my having any background for the people who just know that either something has always been done, and, in reality, it has been done maybe for three and a half years. Or, "That's never been done." And it is invariably that Madale will say, "Well, in 1951 or 1967 we did thus and so."

DOUGLASS: You were there when and knew it happened.

WATSON: Yes. That's correct.

DOUGLASS: Well, if there isn't anything else about the treasurership, I would like to move on to your running for vice chairman. Can you think of anything else you would like to comment about being treasurer?

WATSON: Probably not. It is amazing that something that was an annoying instance or something that was funnier than all get-out, comes up in a

conversation. If you are just sitting here and trying to think about it, it doesn't come up.

I really believed that the only thing that I actually served was a willingness to go out and talk predominantly to women's clubs. I am going back to being the treasurer. Being an officer of the party. Being willing to talk to women activists in the party. And the Young Democrats, if they would invite me. Those were the only two groups that I really was perfectly willing to go anywhere in the state if I was invited. In some instances, I more or less said to somebody, "I don't know why in the world you won't invite me." And put them on the spot and would go. Simply offering the fact that fundamentally, it is my belief, that as a responsible citizen you make an effort to try to understand what is being done in terms of making laws that you must live by.

[End Tape 6, Side A]

[Begin Tape 6, Side B]

WATSON: Because it is my feeling that on issues you need to research the subject matter. And you need to understand thoroughly both the pros and the cons of a subject. And I just never would do what I considered the necessary research work for that kind of thing. As a result, I never got tangled up in that type of thing.

DOUGLASS: You said you would do quite a bit of talking out in the grass roots?

WATSON: In what I consider rank-and-file human beings that are interested in everyday living and participation of trying to be a good citizen as far as your government is concerned.

I never will forget coming back from the 1968 Chicago convention and being asked by a club in the Culver City area, the Mar Vista area. They asked an individual that had also been to Chicago who was a total idealist and a very definite club activist. Because I had been in the party, I got asked to come out and talk. The two of us gave a report of the convention in Chicago. You literally would not have believed that we had both been to the same place on the same days and seen it, as I how I saw it as against how these other people saw it, in terms of their attitude about the Chicago police, the Chicago fire department. The instigators of the

riots. The condemnation of the [Jane] Fondas. Tom Hayden. You would never have recognized it to be the same convention.

DOUGLASS: How did you see it? What were the poles?

WATSON: In the first place, we had been put into an area which was the old convention center down in the area that was stockyards. From my viewpoint, both the police and fire department had done a phenomenal job. They had been asked to do something that was almost impossible to get accomplished. From my viewpoint, God had really looked out for them to not have a rip-roaring riot in that convention center.

DOUGLASS: The area around it.

WATSON: Well, the building itself was a firetrap. It was an absolute firetrap. And the fact that we got in and out, and no unforeseen calamity, as far as I am concerned, was a miracle. And I felt these men were to be given a great deal of appreciation. My observation of the rioting and the type of thing that did happen, the instigators of those things were not the youngsters. The people who masterminded those affairs, from my viewpoint, were fifty- to sixty-years old. They were old-line, deliberate human beings that deliberately plan and figure out how to create uprisings and riots. The other person did not see it that way at all.

Not at all. It was an interesting evening.
They sure got two different reports on it.

DOUGLASS: First of all, you didn't run again as treasurer.
There was a two-year hiatus before you ran as
vice chairman.

WATSON: Yes. It had been three terms. Besides, the
thing went north. There was no reason for my
being involved. And I went back more in dealing
with nothing more than what women were
interested in. And legislation. And trying to
give volunteer time in terms of the need for
women to be interested in basic legislation.

What the steps are in trying to convince an
assemblyman or a senator. Basically, I never
dealt with any great activity with national
things. It has only been statewide. The need
to convince, maybe, a legislator that your idea
has merit: you have to do some research work on
your own, and what you do in terms of getting a
consultant to background this. And the steps
that it has to go through. And where a bill
actually goes. It just doesn't suddenly come
out of thin, blue air. It has a whole path that
it has to go by the time it is amended and
reamended. It goes to the floor of the
assembly. Then it has got to go back across to
the senate. And come back again. All the
detailed red tape that has to be done.

DOUGLASS: What kinds of groups would you talk to? Small?

WATSON: Just small groups. Some of them, being evening meetings, were just the rank-and-file men and women who attended meetings. Or afternoon or luncheon things, like the San Gabriel Women's Club or the Glendale ladies operation.

DOUGLASS: These were party clubs.

WATSON: Yes. They were political. Democratic clubs. That kind of thing.

DOUGLASS: What made you decide then to run for state vice chairman in January of '79?

WATSON: Oh, I got tired of always doing these kinds of things. I thought, "Good heavens." By this time, in all these years, I decided that all these women who were the top deals were not any smarter than I was, and why shouldn't I try it. And I think that letter I put out rather tells you as to why I thought it was worthwhile. I had gotten to the place, there is no doubt that my ego had taken some bruising along the way and so forth, and I was really sharp enough to understand that I was just not in the social world or the economic world that would allow me to run for the state chairmanship.

I thought, "Well, I had worked with O'Neill." I rather admired O'Neill. For a man who was a multi-millionaire who had spent the amount of time between '77 and '79, tromping

this state, going from anything to ten in a club meeting on up to larger [groups], talking on a theory of why the rank-and-file person owes some monetary allegiance to his party. And he had done this for two solid years.

DOUGLASS: He was southern chair.

WATSON: He was southern chair. But he had done this all over the state. I am perfectly aware that, good lord, it was a toy. He had money enough. He didn't need to be doing this at all. He had a theory he wished to expound.

DOUGLASS: He believed in something.

WATSON: Yes. Whether you looked at it with the fact that he believed it because he didn't want to part with any more of his [money], which has been said of him. Or whether it was because he really believed if somebody put in a dollar a day or pledged some sum of money that they would be more interested because they really had a part of it. And I really don't know which he really believed. Or whether it just happened to pique his fancy, and he was just having a great time talking to people throughout the state. In fact, if anybody understands as to what makes Richard O'Neill tick, I would love to sit down and talk with him because he was a fascinating man. Absolutely fascinating.

I thought, "Well, why don't I just see whether this could be done or not." I think, in all honesty, it was an ego trip. I just felt that I had worked, as the rank and file said, in the vineyards long enough, why shouldn't I have some recognition.

DOUGLASS: The chairmanship was coming south. I believe you said in the last interview that you at least talked to O'Neill to see whether he had any problem with this.

WATSON: I asked him if he believed that it would be difficult to have to put up with me if I was vice chair of the party. By this time, the rules had changed that the chair and the vice chair had to be of opposite sex. But they also had to come from the same area. That was another change in the rules. Part of this came up from my having been sitting on this Rules Committee and watching the manner in which we thought about how this party should change. I thought, "Why don't I give it a shot." And he kind of smiled, and he said that he would not have any problem. That's all I asked him. Alice Travis was involved in wanting to run for the chair. She felt absolutely that she was entitled to that.

DOUGLASS: Alice Travis, what position had she held? Was she a vice chair of some kind?

WATSON: She had been the southern women's chair from '77 to '79.

DOUGLASS: Just about as that was being phased out.

WATSON: Right.

DOUGLASS: She was from the south?

WATSON: She was from the Hollywood area. There was this Paula Segal from San Diego County. Alice had decided that she wanted to be the chairman of the party. She decided to run against O'Neill on that setup. And Paula had decided that she would like to try for the vice chairmanship. I think she rationalized in the same fashion that I did. That O'Neill would win the thing, and you had to have a woman vice chair. She thought that this would be her reward for what she felt was all the work and effort and money that she had put into it from the San Diego area.

DOUGLASS: Did she have a party position in San Diego?

WATSON: I am not sure whether she was on the county committee down there. She was listed in the monied unit. If I remember correctly, I think we were with this large, national committee, which was then eighteen or nineteen people instead of just two. That also got changed in the seventies.

DOUGLASS: Give me the mechanics of how this would work when it got to the vote. First, of course, there would have to be a vote for chair.

- WATSON: Yes. That is on Saturday afternoon.
- DOUGLASS: Then the next day, you'd vote on the vice chairman?
- WATSON: That's right. And the other officers.
- DOUGLASS: Then you would not know until the vote on the chair as to whether it was going to be a man or a woman.
- WATSON: That's correct.
- DOUGLASS: Were there any men out there thinking about running for vice chair? On the premise that a woman would be chair?
- WATSON: No. If I remember that, it was a case that it was a foregone conclusion that absolutely O'Neill would get it.
- DOUGLASS: You had a letter that you put out. You obviously had a list of what you thought were key people.
- WATSON: I put that out to the entire state central committee to what names I could get out of the secretary of state's office, in terms of who the state central committee would be that was voting.
- DOUGLASS: How many people would that be at that point?
- WATSON: At that stage of the game, it was probably, I don't remember if it was 900 or 1,100. Something like that.
- DOUGLASS: How many people, what percentage, would come to a meeting to vote?

WATSON: Well, on the full convention, you can get up to 90 percent. What you could be able to get with 3,000, I have no way of knowing.

DOUGLASS: OK. What other things did you do? Did you make phone calls?

WATSON: What the O'Neill people did in the office was they let me know where O'Neill was being asked to speak. Therefore, I would know where there were open meetings. I didn't do anything in the north half of the state. I went to places in the south half of the state. Out to San Bernardino County, Riverside County, down to San Diego County. Wherever I knew O'Neill was going to talk.

DOUGLASS: What would you do? Go to the same meetings?

WATSON: Sure. Go to the same meetings. They would tell me when these were going to be. Alice was mostly there.

DOUGLASS: The two of you would appear and give your pitch.

WATSON: Yes. So did Paula Segal. Alice's problem was that she just never understood that she would make the pitch of what she really had to say in the matter of five, six, seven minutes and then she would keep right on talking. Basically, from my viewpoint, it really undid the crux of what she was saying, and it annoyed people.

But the quirk in this thing was the fact that by O'Neill getting this on Saturday

afternoon, she also had a perfect right to go ahead and file by nine o'clock on Sunday morning for the vice chairmanship. During that Saturday night, there was the story that absolutely that is what she intended to do. So you would have had a three-way operation.

DOUGLASS: In other words, there is no time sequence involved in declaring your candidacy? You can just appear as a candidate.

WATSON: You would have to have stated so. The election was to be at one o'clock in the afternoon, your registration closed by ten o'clock, and filing was closed. She had overnight to do it.

DOUGLASS: What [was the reason]?

WATSON: I will never know whether this really had any effect or not. We had a women's caucus meeting on Sunday morning. Because I was the treasurer of her women's caucus, which I had gotten myself into that year, too, I simply stood up at that meeting and made a report on fund raising. The year's report. The expenses. I gave a detailed deal. It was anything but complimentary. It was facts. With that I got out of that meeting right then and there. I made this report, and with that I left the room. That and a couple of other things, the ladies apparently got into a fair hassle, too, and I wasn't there.

DOUGLASS: Did she appear?

WATSON: She did not run.

DOUGLASS: She was at that meeting.

WATSON: Yes. She was chairing it. When it came down to filing, it was just Paula and myself. It doesn't make sense, because it seems to me we had a runoff on that one.

DOUGLASS: On the vice chairmanship?

WATSON: It may have been the treasurership. There was a second vote count. It may have been on one of the treasurerships there was a second vote.

DOUGLASS: A runoff or a recount.

WATSON: It was a runoff. It had to have been the second time I ran for treasurer. Because I made the statement when I got through with that, boy, that would be the last time I ever got myself into this kind of a donnybrook. That I never in God's world would ever do this again. So, it had to have been. Bob Moretti, who was the speaker of the assembly nominated me on the second go-around, which was '73.

DOUGLASS: That was the second time you ran.

WATSON: The second time. When I got asked by Manatt and Peter to run in '75, I said, "No way. I said in '73, 'I simply won't do this.'" I said, "Well, can you guarantee me that I will not get myself caught in a deal that will just be a rip-roaring competitive thing?" I guess that is the one

that went through. And I did no work on that either. It was just a foregone conclusion.

DOUGLASS: This would have been the last time you ran?

WATSON: This would have been '75. I remember having said that I absolutely would never get myself into this kind of a mess again. No way. The vice chairmanship, the problem on that was the thing was delayed in the voting. What happens in these conventions, all these people who want to save the country and want to be the absolute foundation of electing people and then making laws, end up having to catch a plane at one o'clock [P.M.].

DOUGLASS: And this is Sunday by now. In Sacramento.

WATSON: Yes. They've got to leave. The fascinating thing is that almost 50 percent of these people, if they have given a matter of like thirty-six hours, they have made a fantastic contribution to good government. This is something that I never understood about people who want things to be their way. It seems to me that if you really want things, and you believe, then you have to be willing to give a tremendous amount of time, energy, and if you've got money. You need to give that, too.

[Interruption]

DOUGLASS: Do you recall the vote on the vice chairmanship?

WATSON: No.

DOUGLASS: Did you win fairly solidly?

WATSON: Yes. I did quite well on this.

DOUGLASS: I assume Unruh supported you for this.

WATSON: Yes. Actually, if I remember correctly, this is the one where Unruh's people did a lot of work on it.

DOUGLASS: On the floor?

WATSON: Yes. And it was done out of people from Orange County. It was very interesting. They were there specifically in terms of O'Neill, but they also had had some orders from the treasurer of the state, I realized later. They held people who just absolutely said, "Oh, we've got to go." And they said, "You simply cannot."

DOUGLASS: Do you think you got some positive spinoff from O'Neill or his staff?

WATSON: The people who worked for him, I have no real way of knowing. Actually, the people who worked that particular convention and the people who remained in the offices were two different sets of people, as he became the state party chair. I have to tell you that his "in" clique that were hired in the [office of the] executive secretary, I had a bad time with for that two-year period.

DOUGLASS: Who was his executive secretary?

WATSON: It was a Dennis Desnoo. My real problem with this whole unit was what appeared to me as their insensitivity to their employees. And I had go-arounds with them constantly in that area. From my viewpoint, they had very little compassion for just rank-and-file employees. I really don't know what their salaries were, but the young girl who was the immediate secretary was expected to work the darndest hours you have ever come to pass. No consideration whether they were fed or whether they weren't. There, again, there was many a time I walked in maybe in the middle of the afternoon to give some time and ended up going home at ten or eleven or midnight at night to get work down. Yet, you didn't have the people there, at least you were being told, who were the people of responsibility. They may be in Orange County, and they may be working nine-to-five hours. Regular business hours just like a corporate office.

DOUGLASS: What was Desnoo's background?

WATSON: To this day, I really don't know what it was. It was an interesting thing. To this day, I don't totally understand the operation that O'Neill had. Because he has a woman down that way that even yet runs an organization that raises funds that they put into political things

that O'Neill has control over. I never understood it. I always had the feeling, as far as I was personally concerned, that Richard probably figured that I was absolutely unimportant. He was perfectly courteous. He was always pleasant. He can be an absolute delight at a dinner conversation. He is an exceedingly well-read man. He can be hilariously funny at times. I always had the feeling that I had no understanding of him at all.

DOUGLASS: When you were first in place, the two of you, you as the vice chairman and O'Neill as the chairman, did he ever sit down with you and talk to you about any kind of working relationship?

WATSON: None.

DOUGLASS: What were the duties of the vice chairman?

WATSON: To do whatever enhances the chairman's ability to operate the party.

DOUGLASS: Would this partly entail doing some traveling around?

WATSON: It could have, if you were asked to.

DOUGLASS: He just sort of ignored you?

WATSON: Basically. I could do literally anything I wanted to do. He intimated that he had no objection, but he never offered any concrete program of any sort. I always had the feeling that Dennis operated out of Orange County. It

was just kind of a closed operation.

DOUGLASS: Quite literally, was the headquarters office in Orange County or Los Angeles?

WATSON: Oh, no. There was a headquarters office in Los Angeles. But O'Neill only got into it on rare occasions. But he had a whole headquarters on Broadway [Street] in Santa Ana.

DOUGLASS: Was Dennis Desnoo in L. A.?

WATSON: Yes. Except too many times you wanted him, you found out that he was down in Orange County. He had a couple of people who worked for him that were a little difficult to also either keep track of or to know how competent they were.

DOUGLASS: So would he be the one you would get in touch with? He was the continuity of the staff.

WATSON: I tried to. Or Terry Agaberry, who was supposedly the office manager here, who was a delightful young man. The other was of Basque heritage, a perfectly delightful young girl. From my viewpoint, he literally would work her to death at times. And under the deal where you had to get something out for either a fantastic mailer or a fund raiser, the mechanical work that needed to be done, there was not adequate help. There was no consideration of keeping help overtime and this kind of thing at all.

DOUGLASS: Do you think they optimized the volunteer help they could have pulled in? Or do you think it

was a matter where they should have had more office help?

WATSON: I felt they should have paid for more help. And there wasn't the stress in terms of volunteerism. That was my reaction on the thing. Again, I am sure they didn't see it the way I saw it at all.

DOUGLASS: In those two years, where did you put most of your energy then in spending your time? What did you do? Did you do the things you did anyway?

WATSON: Oh, yes. But just added, and tried to give a fair amount of volunteer time to that office.

DOUGLASS: This took less time, I take it, than being treasurer.

WATSON: You traveled a little more. This was '79 to '81. Where was the convention in '80? In New York?

DOUGLASS: The national party convention.

WATSON: Yes. I went to that one also. And the young people on that one were almost as naive as the ones who were on the deal in '76. Because at the '76 convention, which was the Carter convention, is the one I went on simply as a security blanket for the office force. Because none of them had any background in terms of a national convention. Ultimately, in that deal,

my hotel room and my plane fare were paid for.
I was reimbursed on that.

DOUGLASS: Which one?

WATSON: The '76 one. I think I was also reimbursed on the '80 one. In both instances, it was a case of giving the staff moral support. They were dealing with a situation that none of them had any background on. It was the '80 one, I guess, that I had the problem with [Assemblyman Louis J.] Lou Papan. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: What was that?

WATSON: [Laughter] There was a difference of opinion on that in terms of the national committee. And it was [Governor Edmund G.] Jerry Brown's [Jr.] operation, wasn't it?

DOUGLASS: Yes. He was governor.

WATSON: He was governor. He turned the handling of tickets and this kind of thing, which is always such a donnybrook with people over to [Senator] Leo [T.] McCarthy. You have so much allotted to a state, and then you have three times as many people who by divine right know they should have [a ticket].

I was asked to help out on this. There was a difference of opinion as to where my loyalties had been and where John Tunney's were, who was also very important in this thing. I am not sure whether I am confusing these two

conventions. No, this is it. I was asked to help handle part of this.

DOUGLASS: The tickets, you mean?

WATSON: Yes. The accounting of delegates, and the accounting of who could vote within the delegation proper. Because my statement was: "Look, if Senator Tunney wants me to do this, and he tells me he wants me to do this, I will be happy to do the work. But no way am I going to get into this, unless John Tunney has made the statement to me that he is willing that I assume this."

DOUGLASS: Let me clarify just one thing. You mentioned Leo McCarthy, and now we are talking about John Tunney.

WATSON: Yes. They were both working in this situation. It was a difference of opinion on the Jesse Unruh thing, as against Tunney and McCarthy and Jerry Brown and this whole deal. My reaction was this: that if I knew that Tunney thought that I was trustworthy, I was perfectly willing to get into this mess. But unless John Tunney told me this himself, I didn't intend to get caught where I be absolutely doublecrossed. Because I was classified as part of the Unruh forces.

DOUGLASS: When you say "mess," are you still talking about giving out the tickets?

WATSON: The delegation was also split. You were not being sure as to whether delegations, the actual members of the delegation, were getting what they needed. So, John Tunney came to me and said, "Madale, I would very much appreciate it if you give the time on this." I said, "Yes, sir."

Somewhere in this episode, I was in the hospitality room, and the next room over was the room that McCarthy and Jack Mayesh, who was a man in Jerry Brown's office (what is known as the executive branch of the governorship), were also in the process of trying to give out tickets on a daily basis, when this very portly gentleman came just barging in.

He said, "Is Leo McCarthy in?" I said, "Yes." "I have to see him." I said, "I am sorry. There is no one being allowed in. They are busy. They are in conference. And they wish no interference." And Mr. Papan drew himself up to his very best stature, and he said, "I am Assemblyman Lou Papan." I said, "Yes, sir. I know that." He said, "I have to see Leo and see him now." I said, "I beg your pardon, but I have been asked to secure this door and no one is to come in. Therefore, no, you will not see him now." He was just furious with me, and he turned around and left. Absolutely just muttering.

I never met up with Mr. Papan again until a couple of years ago on the PERS [Public Employees Retirement System] board, and I was invited to the Firehouse [Restaurant] one night for dinner. A guest of Mr. Papan's, after I had been to one of his hearings, where, from my viewpoint, he had been even rougher than Jesse Unruh had been as the chairman of the Ways and Means Committee clear back in 1959 or '60, when I thought that this was the most ruthless man I had ever met and listened to. Well, Lou put him to shame on this deal. He took the deputy of Shirley [R.] Chilton apart one day. It was just horrifying.

DOUGLASS: As chairman of the Ways and Means Committee. Papan?

WATSON: Papan, I don't remember what chairmanship he had. But, anyway, it was a case that Shirley Chilton simply wouldn't show, and she sent her deputy. And [Sidney] Sid McCausland, who was the executive director of PERS, was also going to have to testify in this deal, as was the executive secretary of the STRS [State Teacher's Retirement System] board, which is the teacher's pension board. And I have never, I have just never listened to anybody that tore an individual to shreds as Papan did this deputy to

Shirley, because he was after Shirley. He took it out on the deputy. I thought it was just awful. But I got invited to Mr. Papan's dinner that night, and I went. And he was perfectly charming, which was years after this episode.

DOUGLASS: Well, did this whole mess get sorted out?

WATSON: We did fairly well on this thing.

DOUGLASS: You were being asked to sort out what members were real members of delegations.

WATSON: To be sure that people got the materials that they were entitled to. And that people were properly informed, and that they could be allowed entrance to a meeting that they have the right to be in.

DOUGLASS: This was sort of validating the delegates?

WATSON: Again, it was a case of being put in a position that I was considered honorable and I was considered fair. And, as a result, asked to do what I call just regular idiot work, which is quite frequently unpleasant if you have thwarted somebody who wants to have it his way.

DOUGLASS: But it was a position which someone could have taken advantage of to deflect certain delegates because they favored . . .

WATSON: One way or the other. That is exactly right.

DOUGLASS: Tunney trusted you.

WATSON: It was a very interesting thing to observe that, again, Mr. Tunney and Mr. Unruh certainly had no

love for each other, if I remember correctly. Mr. McCarthy and Mr. Unruh certainly never had any great affinity for one another. Again, I was accepted because--it's the same old story--she may be a battleax, but, absolutely, she is loyal and she has integrity. And that, apparently, I have earned a reputation on.

DOUGLASS: Now, you were the state vice chairman when this happened? Is that right.

WATSON: Yes. This is correct. Because, in '76, on a meeting that Carter and [Senator Walter S.] Mondale were coming in to speak, and somewhere in the deal the room that was assigned in the hotel for this was not going to be large enough. And in and around Washington, where we were--I can't remember in which hotel--the word was out that Carter-Mondale was to come in that morning to speak to the California delegation.

I don't remember yet why it was that Olive Lewis or Kelly didn't have a listing, but they didn't. And I stood at the entrance to this conference room with a New York policemen and a Secret Service man standing right behind me. And in this mob of people, the people who got into that meeting was on my verification. And the delegation, if you remember, is up some three to four hundred people.

DOUGLASS: I'll bet you knew a lot, did you?

WATSON: I knew practically. . . . They moved through, and I simply defied. I just simply said, "No," like this. And the people who were of California but were not on the delegation and the people that were in from other places that were determined they were going to get there, just simply didn't. Because of the law, they abided by my decisions. But this is exactly what I did on that thing. [Laughter]

I got all through, and the New York policeman turned to the security man and said, "Well, she is a very efficient woman, isn't she?" And I looked at that, and I thought, "Oh, boy."

DOUGLASS: That was quite a compliment. You had arrived with him.

WATSON: I had. Those two conventions were fascinating. Out of all the conventions that I had attended, which was from '60 through '84, I only had a voting right on one of them.

DOUGLASS: Maybe as state vice chairman, would you have had a right to vote?

WATSON: I don't remember, but I know that only once was I actually with a right to be on the floor to be able to vote. I had been on the floor every time up to. . . . Once I wasn't on the floor, I was in the gallery. And I was into a TV

[television] room in San Francisco in '84. The '88 convention was the first national convention since 1960 that I have not attended.

DOUGLASS: Is there anything else you would like to say about being state vice chairman before we move on?

WATSON: No. I guess not. Because as I think back now, I realize that that national convention in '80 was fascinating because two of the young kids--we stayed over, three of us stayed over a couple of days--those two youngsters showed me all of New York. Oh, I had a good time, including out onto the harbor and the Statue of Liberty. The whole works. They really catered to Mother. I really had a delightful time. Just marvelous.

That probably was the highlight of that two-year period, actually. Going to that convention. I really actually had no responsibility when I went. I assumed a fair amount before I got all through, but I also had a delightful time.

DOUGLASS: Let me just back up to the period of '77 and '79, when Bruce Corwin was the southern chairman. First of all, I have heard some very complimentary comments about him, as an individual. I wanted to ask you, though, what you thought of him as a functioning southern

chair. Then I want to also talk about the luncheon he gave you.

WATSON: I will not put that on the record.

DOUGLASS: What I am interested in finding out is that this internship program which was named in your honor, was, as I understand it, the result of a luncheon held in your honor. The money from the money was devoted to the Madale L. Watson Internship Program. I know that Corwin was chairman from '77 to '79. Could you fill in the details on that event?

WATSON: It is my understanding that the young woman who was the executive secretary at that time for Mr. Corwin, who was the southern chair, and the young woman who had formerly, anyway, been as a research person in the former Speaker Unruh's office . . .

[End Tape 6, Side B]

[Begin Tape 7, Side A]

WATSON: It is my understanding that after Mr. Corwin was the southern chair of the party, he had, as an executive secretary, a young woman by the name of Robin Kramer. She and another young woman had an idea about doing an intern program within the Democratic party. From what I was told originally, I think that their original idea was that they were trying to get Hubert Humphrey as the key individual involved in this. I do not know whether they ever truly contacted him or whether they did and got nowhere. My understanding is that they also checked out some other individual, a male, but I don't remember a name. My understanding was there was another name that came forth.

DOUGLASS: Was this person to be a focal point for getting this idea together?

WATSON: Yes. For getting it off the ground and getting started. Whoever these people were, it didn't materialize. I do not know which or whether both of the young ladies came up. Both of them had worked with me. They knew of me in terms of my being an activist, in terms of my having been the treasurer of the party for three terms, and my activities within handling campaigns and fund raisers. I had a fair reputation for doing the mechanics on fund raisers through all of the

sixties and a portion of the seventies. Anyway, they came to me and gave me quite a sales talk.

DOUGLASS: These two people.

WATSON: These two young women, in terms of doing this, which I thought was nonsense. But, apparently, they had also talked to Mr. Corwin about it, and he bought the whole theory. So they put their heads together. They hired in a--I am not sure whether they hired her in or whether she volunteered--but the gal was a person who did fund raising also. And they talked to Mr. Unruh on this. With that, they apparently contacted a number of people. They decided to run a fund-raising luncheon. It turned out to be beyond the expectations, I think, of absolutely everybody involved, because there were several hundred people who attended this thing.

DOUGLASS: Where was this held?

WATSON: It was held at the Ambassador Hotel.

DOUGLASS: Was it in April that it was held?

WATSON: I think it was in April of '77.

DOUGLASS: It says that in April of '77 it was established.

WATSON: That was it. It turned out to be a luncheon for Mother. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: You didn't know that.

WATSON: Yes, I knew but I really had no realization. It snowballed is what actually happened.

DOUGLASS: It was a bigger affair than you anticipated?

WATSON: It turned out to be far bigger, because it raised several thousand dollars. I have acclamations from the county and one from the assembly. I've got a whole unit of memorabilia that still sits on a chair in a front bedroom that I have not put up and never will.

DOUGLASS: Were these all presented to you at the luncheon?

WATSON: These were all presented to me at the luncheon.

DOUGLASS: Who introduced you? Did you have to say anything?

WATSON: I was smart enough to say very little. Actually, I was somewhat overwhelmed at the amount of people who attended and who made contributions to it. I think there is a program on that, and I will hunt it up. I believe there was a whole program put together for that day. Anyway, it turned out to be a far larger event. Maybe the two girls who thought it up in the first place thought it would turn out this way. It was certainly overwhelming, as far as I was concerned.

DOUGLASS: It sounds like a high point in one's life experience.

WATSON: Yes. It certainly was. It was a very interesting thing. There was a whole unit put together for applications. They were mailed out

to colleges all over southern California, for applications to this. The program lasted about five years. The only reason that it does not exist today was that, in the long haul, it meant creating a corporation, creating a foundation, and then it meant absolutely working constantly to raise funds.

My reaction to this was very similar to when I used to go out and recruit blood. As long as I could donate blood, I could convince other people to do so. When I couldn't, I simply was unable to convince other people to do so. I felt that I really had nothing to offer people in asking them to contribute their money. I have never considered myself a fund raiser. I am quite capable of putting together the mechanics of raising funds. I know how to do the mechanical work on these things, but I do not believe that I have any ability and nothing to sell or offer to get somebody else to part with money. Therefore, this fund lasted, I think, about five years. It handled probably seventy-five to a hundred young people, total.

DOUGLASS: I see by its description that they could come for academic credit during the college year or have a paid staff position during the summer.

WATSON: Yes. Which turned out to be about \$1,000 per young person. [Michael] Mike Galizio in Speaker

Brown's office was one of the first recipients of this fund. Again, I would have to go home and look to tell you the various young people that were involved in it.

But, it took only a very short time for these youngsters to be into the office and working. They were the ones who got this deal of the left index finger, "Now, young lady," and it was a very short time when it became, "You are part of Mother Watson's youngsters." That is part of where the Mother Watson thing got started.

DOUGLASS: Did you become immediately involved in getting this thing off the ground?

WATSON: Yes. I did work at it at that time. To the extent that this word use of the word "Mother" came up. Somewhere in this deal, we raised funds with a button that has "Mother" and something else on it. [Laughter]

DOUGLASS: Mother is definitely part of it.

WATSON: Mother Watson is, yes. Well, I have always had a bad time with Charles [Manatt]. He insisted upon always referring to me as "Mother Madale." I have a part of each unit of people who refer to me that way, which annoys me to death. I don't mind be called Mother Watson, but Mother Madale seems to me kind of sanctimonious, and I don't care for that.

I think it did some good at the time, as many of these funds do. They help some youngsters. In this case, besides the criteria that was put together for what they were supposed to be getting, it was aimed for people in political science classes in colleges. There, again, they were young people who did end up getting California history via Madale Watson, whether they wanted it or not. [Laughter] But that is what they got.

DOUGLASS: Where did your first students come from? What colleges? Can you remember, particularly, the first group?

WATSON: Well, I remember a couple out of UCLA [University of California, Los Angeles]. There were one or two out of the Pomona/Claremont area.

DOUGLASS: How about USC?

WATSON: I can't remember.

DOUGLASS: How many at a time?

WATSON: This ended up so that the last year I don't think there were more than three or four, because there was not much money that was raised. In fact, I think that the last year, the party actually subsidized it.

DOUGLASS: Now that would have been '83. At first, though, would you have around six or seven young people?

WATSON: It seems to me that it was eight that first go-around.

DOUGLASS: Would you have them only one semester?

WATSON: You had them through the summer months, I thought.

DOUGLASS: Let me see. It says, "Awarded each academic semester and in the summer." So they got credit for the summer. They had to spend at least ten hours weekly. And the summer ones were paid, that is the way this describes it, anyway.

WATSON: Predominantly, it was the summer months, which would have been about ten weeks, if I remember correctly. And those that gave time through an academic year, as far as I know, were strictly on a volunteer basis.

DOUGLASS: Yes. They were. That is what this is saying.

WATSON: The thing that happened, and has happened down through the last two decades, for heaven's sake, is that the last two years are the only two years that I have not given a lot of time into the Democratic headquarters. Up to that time, I simply gave volunteer time. As a result, it didn't make much difference who was there volunteering and at what age level, they just got what is known as, "Mother Watson's character development classes." [Laughter] I simply gave a fair amount of time as a volunteer into the Democratic headquarters.

DOUGLASS: Well, did you **enjoy** your association with this?

WATSON: Yes. It was **started** with a very, very high academic philosophy. These two young ladies aimed high. In my opinion, it deteriorated. Because, what it really did, it was a case of convincing **the** young people that they ought to be. . . . The **p**arty proper, the employee level of it, was **just** looking for volunteer help. I didn't feel that they were giving them anything, fundamentally, in return. As a result, I would go in and work with them on mailers and the kind of work you have to do in a headquarters. If they worked with me, they also got a running conversation of past history.

DOUGLASS: So it takes effort to make something like that work.

WATSON: I know it does. I, personally, was not willing to give the amount of effort that was needed. It needed to be turned into a foundation.

DOUGLASS: It takes quite a bit of capital. It is a great idea.

WATSON: That's right. It would mean having somebody out being a fund raiser. I am perfectly aware that I am not a fund raiser. I did well in these kinds of things. But I understand. Charles Manatt was the person who raised funds. Jesse Unruh raised funds. Stanley Mosk was the

selling point. Whoever it was I was putting a dinner on for, that individual was the person who had something to offer in return for somebody else's signed check. At least I understand that.

DOUGLASS: All right. Anything else about that before we go on?

WATSON: No. It was an interesting experience. As I say, I was absolutely overwhelmed at the turnout on the affair. I was just amazed.

DOUGLASS: It sounds like a lot of people wanted a chance to recognize you.

WATSON: I gathered that was true. I had no understanding that would come to pass. I have no idea what causes the quirk, but, actually, I have never put up anything of the things that you would classify as memorabilia. At this stage of my life, I have no reason to believe that I am going to. And I have no reason to believe that anybody else is going to do anything about it when I am gone. [Laughter] I don't understand why I am particularly like that, but it didn't mean I wasn't pleased. I truly was. I was absolutely overwhelmed, because if I remember correctly, I was not capable of making much of a speech.

DOUGLASS: Pretty emotional?

WATSON: Yes.

DOUGLASS: Completely changing the subject, in a sense, but not in another sense, the 1961 reapportionment is a famous one. As I understand it, you worked in the Los Angeles County area. Robert Crown was given the responsibility, statewide, by Unruh to run the reapportionment.

WATSON: Robert Crown was the chairman of the Elections and Reapportionment Committee. He was chairman of that assembly committee in 1961. I really do not remember how Charles G. Bell had gotten to Jesse, pertaining to a theory of how you took statistics for Los Angeles County and prepared them to have an idea of how you could cut up the county. Off the top of my head, I was going to say thirty-six assembly districts, but I may be wrong on that.

DOUGLASS: Thirty-one assembly districts in the county.

WATSON: Because there isn't that many today. We moved them out. In that day, they had to stay within the county geographical territory.

DOUGLASS: Right. You could not have any assembly districts flopping over a county line.

WATSON: Yes. Therefore, the thing was different than it is today.

DOUGLASS: Could I just go back a minute? Leroy Hardy, who was a Long Beach State College professor, was hired to head the professional staff for this reapportionment.

WATSON: He worked in and out of Sacramento.

DOUGLASS: Right. Was Charles Bell working . . .

WATSON: I think Charles Bell was still a student then. I think.

DOUGLASS: Was he associated with Hardy?

WATSON: I have no recollection of our having anything to do with Leroy Hardy until we got to Sacramento. Basically, Charles Bell had a theory of how you could put together the demographics of Los Angeles County. He apparently talked to Jesse about it. Because he, too, was an activist within this congressional district that we were all involved in during the fifties.

DOUGLASS: Which is the Fifteenth District.

WATSON: Right. All that I can remember is that we ended up, there was Charles Bell and a young UCLA student by the name of Marshall Lewis and my Margaret [Watson].

DOUGLASS: That is your daughter?

WATSON: Daughter. Part of the time, a young fellow by the name of [Donald] Don Fenstermaker. We ended up at my house with about three small adding machines and a second-hand Fortran calculator, all operated by hand. What was done was figuring out a vote pattern of the 1960 election against the registration of 1960, against, it seems to me, the treasurer's office of another election. Something that was innocuous.

DOUGLASS: There were two recent ballot issues that had been voted on, in a primary or special election. I read that the '60 presidential election and two recent ballot measures were manually overlaid with census tracts. Does that make sense to you?

WATSON: Was this statewide or just Los Angeles County?

DOUGLASS: I don't know.

WATSON: Leroy Hardy had a hand in this deal that was as the state as a whole. As did a young man by the name of [] Bolinger, who had been employed with the Los Angeles County central committee. For Los Angeles County, we had this one lone vote. You had the feeling that just true Democrats and conscientious ones would be the only ones who would be basically voting that. Charles figured out a formula on this darned thing.

We did this all by hand. We did this all on three-by-five-inch cards for every one of the precincts of Los Angeles County. Once we had gotten this figured out mathematically, then we took paper and we laid out Los Angeles County via precincts. I have this. Took this thing together, shaded everything percentagewise, red to orange to yellow to blue and green and colored them in. So, when you finally put all

of these pieces of paper together, you got them all.

DOUGLASS: You had three pieces of paper that were overlaid?

WATSON: No. From your cards, you simply colored it in with Crayola so that you had it shaded on the one paper.

DOUGLASS: What was on your three-by-five cards?

WATSON: That was your vote and percentage of whether the district was like 75 percent Democratic, 65 percent, 50 percent, or only 30 percent. This kind of thing. You had a card for each precinct or census tract. I am not sure which it was. I am not sure whether I have any of those cards or not. But from the cards, you colored your precinct maps of the county. Then you put those together so that you had the entire county, either by precinct or census tracts.

DOUGLASS: You had a map in front of you, say a census tract, and you could read from your card for that particular precinct that you were going to do. According to the percentage on the card, if it was 60 percent, that would be red. If it were under 50 percent, that would be another color?

WATSON: Yes.

DOUGLASS: Would 50 percent be the breaking point?

WATSON: I don't remember. Somewhere was the breaking point. This must have been by census tract. It was the plat maps you got of the county, because you went down to the recorder's office and bought these things. Then, you put that all together, and you had to move all of the furniture in the living room. I have a fourteen-by-eighteen-foot living room. We laid this all out on my living room floor.

Then, ultimately, Jesse Unruh came and looked at this thing. Between Bell and Unruh and John Gaffney, I think back and the opportunity I missed was never taking a picture of Jesse Unruh, who must have weighed like 265 pounds, and John Gaffney, who probably weighed about 250, down on their hands and knees crawling, around, reshuffling, and making up their minds as to where this thing belonged and where it didn't.

If I remember correctly, it was in February, right around Valentine's Day, that we packed this stuff, and we took it to Sacramento. Then it was shown to not only Mr. Crown, but all the boys that had to be sold a bill of goods in terms of what you would do and what you would not do. For some reason or other, between then and June--and I can't tell you the date--I went up on that because I let Margaret stay out of

school, and she went to Sacramento on that situation. [Laughter] That is when I found my daughter in El Mirador's bar one night doing a hula with Jesse Unruh at a microphone singing Mack the Knife. I thought, "Oh, dear me, this eighteen-year old, good heavens, am I going to have problems?"

Anyway, somewhere after that episode, I was in Sacramento for a state committee meeting of some kind. Because I went up just for a weekend. Jesse said to me, "Could you stay up here for a day or two?" I said, "I guess I could. Why?" He said, "We don't have the percentages." I don't remember what portion of the state they didn't have it on, but it was not done. He was not too charitable to Mr. Bolinger about what he allegedly had not done. I don't know whether he had or had not. There was a difference of opinion between what the senate was doing and what the assembly was doing. He said, "We just need somebody that will do arithmetic." I said, "Yes. I don't see why I can't."

DOUGLASS: At a price?

WATSON: I don't even remember if I was reimbursed. Yes, I was reimbursed because Tom Bane had me put on a contract basis through the assembly Rules Committee. Anyway, I was contracted.

DOUGLASS: As a consultant, right?

WATSON: I guess. Something of the sort. Anyway, all I know is that I stayed there three full weeks with just the clothing I had gone up there [with] for a weekend committee meeting. And I stayed three weeks. In the process of this thing, these darned figures out of Los Angeles County were classified as the "Bell-Watson units." When it went to committee, and when it was presented and voted upon, it was voted in as the Bell-Watson units for the reapportionment.

DOUGLASS: Now, could you define a Bell-Watson unit for me?

WATSON: No, I could not. Because it is these units, this deal that I am telling you about that went on to the. . . .

DOUGLASS: So it is a formula.

WATSON: It was a formula being used to arrive at a firm, Democratic loyalty within the registered voters. And it has to be mathematically proportional to the actual census. You have to deal in reapportionment with the population. Well, there is a considerable difference. We have twenty-eight million people right now in this state. This morning's paper says that we have fourteen million registered voters, which is seventy-three-point-something-or-other percent of the possible people that could be registered.

But if fourteen million are registered, and the population is twenty-eight million. . . . But all I can remember about this deal, it was a proportional deal. You had to deal on census, but you were looking for Democratic loyalty.

DOUGLASS: So what you came up with on the card was the key, because that was going to cause you to put a color of one kind or another on the map?

WATSON: That's right.

DOUGLASS: You took voter registration, and you took this vote . . .

WATSON: You also had to deal with the census, the actual population. I can remember having the census book. Oh, they are like a telephone book.

DOUGLASS: You had to make registration and census coincide.

WATSON: If you had a census tract 1,112, you had to know what the population was in that census, that geographical territory. You also had to know what the registration was, and you had to know how those registered voters voted on a presidential election of Kennedy and, it seemed to me, the treasurer level of the statewide thing that gave you an indication of true, Democratic loyalty. Where did you pick up the two ballot measures? I don't remember that.

DOUGLASS: I think I picked this up in [T. Anthony] Quinn's material, and this was statewide. My notes say

that they hired Hardy, who had done his dissertation on the '51 reapportionment, which was the Republican reapportionment.

WATSON: Yes. But this was done by the man who was the chancellor of [University of California] Riverside.

[Interruption]

DOUGLASS: The statement was that they used the results from the 1960 presidential election and took two recent ballot measures as standards, and they manually overlaid these on the census tract.

WATSON: This may be true for statewide. I have no way of knowing. The other thing that was fascinating about that, in the three weeks I was there, you laid out Charlie Myers' San Francisco deal by census tract and voting and this kind of thing, as they are telling you here. Charlie took it home, and Mrs. Myers looked it over. And Charlie would change it over the weekend. He did his district by parishes, and he operated totally by the way the parishes were when he was first elected and not as the voting pattern shifted. And we went round and round with dear Charlie, who only saw his district by the parish and only remembering the parish as how it had been, not as people moved in and out by the parishes. It was fascinating to listen to this

go-around with dear Charlie Myers.

DOUGLASS: In terms of Los Angeles County, you were basically working on the assembly districts. Were you trying to do it in such a way that you divided up the Democratic percentages, not so that they were totally overwhelming but you were spreading them out to maximize your opportunities?

WATSON: As far as I understood that story, what you were trying to do was to assure a Democratic assembly. And do it where you placated enough Republicans that you could get a two-thirds vote to get the bill passed. In the long haul, Mr. Unruh was a much better master at figuring how to get things through that legislature than the the [John] Burton or the [Howard] Berman-[Henry] Waxman machines of ten years later, where it all had to go to court. It went to court in '71 and in '80. It was still in court in '82. There have been two go-arounds on this.

DOUGLASS: You have to placate enough Republicans in that situation.

WATSON: Of course. He didn't want this through just a vote. It seems to me that he had three or five votes to spare when he finally got a vote on it.

DOUGLASS: It passed the assembly 55-25. You needed two-thirds. And he picked up ten Republicans.

WATSON: Well, there you are.

DOUGLASS: One of which was Assemblyman Lou [A.] Cusonavich of L. A. And Assemblyman [John L. E.] Bud Collier.

WATSON: He was an assemblyman in that day? Yes. Then he went out. Anyway, that was what was being aimed for. All that I know is only the assembly side of this. I know that the assembly people thought the senate just didn't have brains enough to come in out of the rain on how they were doing it. Then there was this difference of opinion. [Louis] Lou Angelo was the consultant to Crown in '61.

Because the reapportionment committee that had to redo all of this in '66, on the one-man, one-vote. . . . We got caught on a whole new deal on this thing by the law in '66. That was under Assemblyman Don Allen, and the consultant was Steven E. Smith. And in this one, we went to computers, because that is when [] Bill Below went out and bought two textbooks and stayed up half the night, night after night, and finally figured out a program. We did the '66 one by very antiquated computers.

DOUGLASS: The first one. You worked on that one, too.

WATSON: Yes. I sure did.

DOUGLASS: You were in on the whole show.

WATSON: Yes. I worked on both of those.

DOUGLASS: Did you work on the assembly districts again?

WATSON: Just the assembly. I only worked on the assembly on this thing. In both cases, the assembly, in typical fashion, thought that it was far superior in its abilities than the senate. Whether that is a fact or not, I don't really know.

DOUGLASS: I know that you had computers in '66, but were you going through the same kinds of exercises on the '66 one that you did on the '61, in terms of strategies?

WATSON: I can't remember what we used for criteria on that one.

DOUGLASS: This was under Don Allen?

WATSON: This was under Don Allen. Steve Smith, who is out in the [San Fernando] valley and is an attorney today and a probate referee and also works in bankruptcy court, is still around. Steven E. Smith was the individual who was the consultant with Below.

These were fascinating men. Steve Smith was one who was out of bed at five in the morning, bright eyed and bushy tailed, raring to go, but faded by five o'clock in the afternoon. Bill Below does not notice that the day arrives until somewhere between twelve and one o'clock [P.M.]. He would do most of his work after eight or nine o'clock in the evening. I worked

between these two men probably for a good six months. You had things ready for Steve early in the morning. You always left at night with a pot of coffee and a clean, large ashtray for Below. And come back the next morning and find an empty pot of coffee and a whole package of cigarette butts.

DOUGLASS: Well, which was more exciting, '66 or '61?

WATSON: The 1961 was because it was brand new. We were into something that was just absolutely experimental. I arrived in '61 with the thought, "If I have to listen to the Kingston Trio again, I am going to scream." We simply totally wore out a couple of Kingston Trio records. This is what the kids were listening to. In the '66 one, I was all set to learn to drive and simply came in one morning and Steven said, "Madale, this weekend we are going to Sacramento, and we are going to be there from here on out." That was it.

DOUGLASS: This was after you completed your . . .

WATSON: No. We just got orders. The law had come through, and this is it. That is where we went. I ended up in Sacramento there with Bill and Steve.

DOUGLASS: You certainly had to be flexible, didn't you?

WATSON: It is an interesting thing. The state committee bought me a steno [stenographer's] chair back in

'66. I took it from there to the state building to work. We took it to Sacramento. Brought it home. I returned it to the office when I was back with the state committee. Would you believe that I came across it in the equipment we were given for the Unruh-for-Governor campaign of '70? I took a look and realized that it belonged to the state central committee and said, "That's nonsense. That was my chair. They bought it for me." I brought it home. In '75, I took it over to work. I am sitting on it today in the office that I am working in today. [Laughter] That chair has been all over the state of California.

DOUGLASS: Well, that must have been interesting to work on computers for the first time.

WATSON: I didn't understand the computer thing at all. I did learn how to do with two fingers, punch the thing on the cards.

DOUGLASS: Key punch.

WATSON: I did learn to do some of that. I can't really remember the kinds of work I was asked to do on the '66 reapportionment. On the '61 one, it was all handwork. You did it by hand.

DOUGLASS: Did you have filebox by filebox of these three-by-five cards?

WATSON: Yes. You just bought them by the gross. [Laughter] That's why it tickles me sometimes

when these kids get together. If it is on a computer, then it is right. I say, "Look, you can get these things done if you never had a computer. It has been done. I can tell you, that no matter what is on the computer, it is garbage in and garbage out if you are not accurate in the first place."

DOUGLASS: That's true. Well, anything else you would like to add for posterity?

WATSON: No. I finally have one box that can go to the archives.

DOUGLASS: Great. That's real progress. Take it one box at a time.

[End Session 3]

[End Tape 7, Side A]

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